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ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS

IS THE BIBLE DIVINE?

A SIX NIGHTS' DISCUSSION

BETWEEN

MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH,

OF LONDON, (EDITOR OF THE *National Reformer*),

AND

MR. ROBERT ROBERTS,

OF BIRMINGHAM, (EDITOR OF *The Christadelphian*, AND AUTHOR OF *Twelve Lectures*),

IN LEICESTER AND BIRMINGHAM,

ON JUNE 13th, 14th, 15th, 20th, 21st and 22nd, 1876.

PROPOSITION:—"That the Scriptures are the reliable and authentic record of Divine revelation."
MR. ROBERTS affirms; MR. BRADLAUGH denies.

TOGETHER WITH

A REVIEW OF THE DISCUSSION,

BY MR. ROBERTS.

LONDON: F. PITMAN, 20, PATERNOSTER ROW.

BIRMINGHAM: ROBERT ROBERTS, ATHENÆUM ROOMS, TEMPLE ROW.

1876.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

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PREFACE.

It is an unusual and unsatisfactory circumstance for a discussion to be divided up into two parts between two separate towns. The reader will naturally be curious to know, not only how the discussion came about, but also how it came to assume this extraordinary and inconvenient shape, from which, however, with the whole discussion in his hands, he will not be a sufferer. His curiosity cannot be more effectually gratified than by placing before him the correspondence which led to the holding of it. It is as follows:

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,
18th February, 1876.

MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH. DEAR SIR.—You may be aware that the desirability of a meeting in debate between yourself and me has been for a considerable time urged by many persons who know us both. I believe the matter was verbally mentioned to you some months ago by Mr. Arthur Andrew, of London; and you were good enough to express your willingness to hold the proposed meeting.

I now write for the purpose of putting the proposal into formal shape. I will undertake, for six nights—spread over two weeks—three successive nights in each week, to affirm that the Scriptures are the authentic and genuine records of Divine revelation. I leave you to choose whether the debate shall be by ordinary speeches, or by the Socratic mode, or a mixture of both, merely expressing my opinion that the latter is, perhaps, on the whole, best calculated to put the matter in debate to a thorough test.

As to the place where the debate should take place, the majority of my friends are in favour of Birmingham. I presume Birmingham will not be unacceptable to you. We should, probably, have a larger audience there than anywhere else.

As to the date, it will probably suit the state of your engagements, as it will mine, if I name a somewhat distant day, say the autumn of the present year; by which time, the Town Hall, Birmingham, will be re-opened after alterations and repairs. The disposal of the surplus, if any, after the payment of expenses, I would leave to your proposal, subject to mutual agreement.

If these proposals are agreeable to you, you could, probably, name a local committee for the execution of arrangements in detail. Respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

"THE NATIONAL REFORMER," 29, TURNER STREET, COMMERCIAL ROAD, LONDON, E.,
21st February, 1876.

DEAR SIR,—I have handed your letter to Mr. W. H. Holyoak, Belgrave Gate, Leicester, who will write you, and who has my full authority to arrange. Yours respectfully,
C. BRADLAUGH.

Robert Roberts, Esq., 64, Belgrave Road, Birmingham.

45, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER,
February 25th, 1876.

TO ROBERT ROBERTS, ESQ. DEAR SIR,—I write on behalf of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. He has left to me the arrangement of the debate between you and him.

Please consider that it is settled to come off. The time we prefer is during the month of April or the beginning of May.

The place, Leicester Temperance Hall, for, say three nights. Mr. B. will not object to three nights in Birmingham as well if you wish. The mode of debate: we assent with you to the mixed, viz., question and answer and ordinary speeches.

We trust you will see your way to this earlier date; for the date you name appears to us so remote, that a thousand events may occur between now and then to prevent its ever taking place. Trusting, however, that you will see your way, and waiting your reply, I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

26th February, 1876.

MR. HOLYOAK. DEAR SIR.—Thanks for yours of the 25th inst. according to Mr. Bradlaugh's promise to me.

Your proposals, however, are not quite acceptable in some details. The date is too early. It is a matter of impossibility for me to take part much sooner than the time I mentioned to Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Collyer, your townsman, will be able to inform you of one reason, sufficient of itself. I admit my time is somewhat remote; but this need not be a disadvantage. As for the uncertainties, they would apply with nearly equal force to an earlier date, and must be submissively encountered.

As to the place, I presume Mr. Bradlaugh can have no personal choice, as his friends will be as numerous in Birmingham as in Leicester; therefore, I must ask your consent to Birmingham. It would be a great disappointment to the majority of my friends if it were not to take place there, and would, to some extent, frustrate the object I have in view in consenting to encounter a man of Mr. Bradlaugh's calibre and reputation. I can understand your preference for Leicester, and do not quarrel with it. To have the debate there would also be in accordance with the wishes of many in that town whom I should greatly desire to gratify. Nevertheless, the preponderance of reasons from my point of view, is sufficiently in favour of Birmingham to justify me in pressing for it. If you feel it would be conceding an advantage to me, you have also to remember that you can well afford to concede any advantage to one who will figure so small in collision with so popular a man and a cause.

Three nights is an utterly inadequate time for the argument I have to submit. Twelve nights would not be too long. It will be necessary for you to consent to six nights, and these must, of course, be in one place; for it would place both speakers in an awkward position to have a new audience for the second half of the debate.

Regretting my inability to return a simple affirmative to your proposals, and looking for your reply, respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

45, HUMBERSTONE GATE,

Feb. 28th, 1876.

TO ROBERT ROBERTS, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Yours of the 26th inst. I have forwarded to Mr. Bradlaugh, along with a copy of what follows; not seeing what I can have to do with arranging for a debate to come off in Birmingham.

I should have been pleased to be instrumental in bringing it about in Leicester; but in Birmingham, the Birmingham friends had better be consulted. It seems to me they are the parties to move in the matter, and not I. You will please reply, advising me of your opinion. I am, dear sir, yours truly,

WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

45, HUMBERSTONE GATE,

TO ROBERT ROBERTS, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Mr. Bradlaugh writes me as follows:—

"DEAR SIR.—As the challenge was given by Mr. Roberts's friends in Leicester, and as the Leicester friends first asked me to meet Mr. Roberts there, a debate in Leicester must take precedence of any other debate with Mr. Roberts; therefore, I return you his letter, and you had better send a copy of mine to you. I do not mean this as an objection to meet Mr. Roberts

in Birmingham; but I do mean that I think it would be a slight on the Leicester Secular Society if I passed that town over. I nevertheless leave myself entirely in the hands of the Leicester friends. Yours truly,

C. BRADLAUGH."

I might say that we in Leicester quite concur with the view Mr. B. takes.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully, WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM.

2nd March, 1876.

Mr. HOLYOAK. DEAR SIR.—I am in receipt of yours, without date, but presumably of to-day.

Mr. Bradlaugh leaves himself entirely in your hands. I cannot quite comprehend why a man of his independence should do this instead of dealing directly with me, and shaping his own course. Nevertheless, he having done so, with you will rest the responsibility of preventing the discussion, if you insist upon a condition needless on your side, and on my side inconsistent with the object of the discussion.

I cannot recognise the claim, or at least the ground of the claim put forward on behalf of Leicester. It is not true that the "challenge" was given by my friends in Leicester. The "challenge" has been given by me, at the instigation of friends in Birmingham, London, Leicester, and other places; and therefore Leicester has nothing to do with fixing the place. Mr. Bradlaugh may have heard of it first at Leicester; but this does not confer the right in question. I named Birmingham in my first letter, pressed for it in my second, and you will pardon me if I insist upon it in my third.

If a second debate should seem desirable to all parties, I promise it shall be in Leicester, so far as I am concerned; but the first encounter must take place in the metropolis of the Midlands.

Mr. Bradlaugh says he has no objection to meet me in Birmingham, and although he says in the beginning of his letter, that Leicester must take the precedence, by the last sentence he leaves the decision with you. To you, therefore, I appeal, to waive the objection and to allow the arrangements for the discussion to proceed. Respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

45, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER,

3rd March 1876.

ROBERT ROBERTS, Esq. DEAR SIR—Yours of yesterday is to hand. Mr. Bradlaugh has left the arrangement of bringing about a debate with you in my hands. With the reason why I imagine we are ~~not~~ concerned. I take it that what we have to do with is the fact. And the responsibility you name, I accept. You say, "It is not true that the challenge was given by my friends in Leicester." That, sir, is a positive statement. Let us see upon what basis it rests, and whether that little word *not* is not a mistake on your part. The date of your first to Mr. Bradlaugh is February the 18th, 1876, but on January the 30th, 1876, a gentleman made a statement in the Lecture Hall of the Temperance Hall, Leicester, before a large audience, to the effect that Mr. Roberts *was* prepared to meet either Mr. Holmes or Mr. Bradlaugh in public debate on the question—"Is the Bible true?" I see no reason why I should not give the gentleman's name; it was Mr. Vicars Collyer, who, I believe, is a friend of yours; and with the view of testing that statement, I waited upon him during the week, and on February 4th, I advised Mr. Bradlaugh of the statement publicly made by Mr. V. C.; and Mr. B. replied by saying that he only knew Mr. Roberts as a Christadelphian; that he knew nothing against him, and wished to be informed of the terms of the challenge, and whether he had a respectable committee in Leicester, saying, I shall, probably, be governed by my friends there. Now, sir, you can reconcile this by saying "It is not true," I do not see. On that point, I beg to differ from you in thinking that Leicester has nothing to do with it.

To second promises I cannot attend until the first statement be verified. It is with that I have to do, and to that I confine myself. I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

4th March, 1876.

MR. HOLYOAK. DEAR SIR.—The circumstance you mention, which had escaped my memory, explains your view and Mr. Bradlaugh's as to the origin of the challenge. I cannot admit, however, that it gives the real foundation for the facts as they stand.

Mr. Collyer's intimation of my willingness to debate, (which he made of his own motion in response to some challenge from the platform), was merely the declaration of a privately-known fact, and not a challenge in the sense of carrying with it the local obligations now sought to be deduced from it. I was not aware of the incident till after it happened, and it made so little impression on me that I had forgot it. I admit it is open to the construction you and Mr. Bradlaugh have put upon it, and that, therefore, you are free from the imputation you seem to see in my denial; but you must be too experienced in such matters, to confound an unofficial intimation of willingness to debate with the formal thing implied in a "challenge."

The "challenge" is contained in my letter of the 18th ult., and with that as such, my Leicester friends had nothing to do. That challenge, as I said in my last, is the result of the expressed wishes of friends in divers places.

To free the matter from the complications arising from the intervention of third parties, I hereby renew the challenge, to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in Birmingham for six nights, for the discussion of the subject proposed in my first letter. Yours respectfully,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

45, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER,

6th March, 1876.

TO ROBERT ROBERTS, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Your acknowledgment of your memory having been refreshed as to the origin of this correspondence, and the contemplated debate between yourself and Mr. C. Bradlaugh, is very honourable to you. And although you cannot admit that we in Leicester have the strongest claim for the debate to take place here, it is satisfactory to know that you do not deny that we in Leicester were the first movers in this matter.

The facts I named in my last I repeat. Mr. V. Collyer said you were prepared to debate, and I with a view of testing that statement, waited upon him to accept and arrange. Ever since I have been trying to bring you and Mr. B. together; but now I begin to fear that my efforts will be fruitless.

I should have been glad if it could have been arranged, but you seem to stick fast to Birmingham, for what reason I cannot tell, but I can tell I have nothing to do with Birmingham, and am not interested in any way of its taking place there.

The facts are very simple: you were either prepared or you were not.

The statement was plain, as plain could be, and now I think we in Leicester cannot be charged with neglecting it; and besides according to your letters you will not be prepared until towards the end of the year. If so, it appears to me that there can be no use in talking about it so very long before-hand. It will be soon enough in September to re-open the correspondence. I am Sir, yours respectfully,

WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

SEA SIDE,

10th March, 1876.

MR. HOLYOAK. DEAR SIR.—Your letter of the 6th inst. has been forwarded to me from Birmingham, and as it is calculated to create an artificial version of the facts, I cannot refrain from making the following remarks.

1.—I have not acknowledged that "my memory has been refreshed as to the origin of this correspondence, and the contemplated debate." The refreshment of my memory related to an incident which explained how you could take such a view of the origin of the debate as you did; but which had nothing to do with its real origin. The origin of the correspondence, is my own letter to Mr. Bradlaugh of the 18th ult. The origin of that letter was of many

months' previous date, in conversations at different places. The letter itself contains evidence of this. The second sentence refers to the matter having been mentioned months before, by Mr. A. Andrew of London. I have merely been waiting for such prospects of health as would justify me in venturing upon the strain of a debate with Mr. Bradlaugh.

Please, therefore, to understand that my acknowledgment of refreshment of memory refers to the origin of your misconception, and not to the origin of the proposed debate; also that I do deny that you in Leicester were the first movers in the matter. I am the first mover in the matter, as the result of the suggestions spread over a considerable antecedent period. You have come to consider yourselves as the first movers, by an incident which I have admitted excuses you; but which I deny constitutes the origin of the matter.

2.—It strikes me as somewhat absurd, for you to talk of ineffectual attempts to bring Mr. Bradlaugh and me together, seeing that I have offered to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in Birmingham, and that Mr. Bradlaugh has left it with you to decide whether the meeting shall be there or not. You have simply to decide to bring us together in Birmingham, and the thing is done. Your saying you have nothing to do with Birmingham, does not dispose of the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh has left the decision in your hands.

3.—The facts are, as you say, exceedingly simple. I am prepared to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in Birmingham and have sent him a proposal to that effect. Mr. Bradlaugh says he leaves it with you, and you interpose yourself as an obstacle. If I could be sure you are in this acting by Mr. Bradlaugh's instructions, I should be tempted to doubt Mr. Bradlaugh's reputation for courage; but having no evidence that it is so, I refrain from drawing a conclusion.

4.—The lateness of the date proposed by me, is no reason for deferring the decision. That lateness is a necessity, apart from the condition of my health. My engagements are generally filled-up six months in advance; and if we don't arrange now, it will be difficult for me to arrange at the time you mention. Another consideration is, that the Birmingham Town Hall is so well occupied that we should stand a poor chance of engaging it, unless we did so several months ahead.

But you say you "have nothing to do with Birmingham." Consequently, early or late, we could have no object in re-opening the correspondence with reference to a discussion to take place in that town. I must, therefore, appeal direct to Mr. Bradlaugh, which I do by this post.

Respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

SEA SIDE,

10th March, 1876.

MR. BRADLAUGH. DEAR SIR.—In a final letter forwarded from Birmingham, Mr. Holyoak writes me that he has nothing to do with Birmingham, and no interest in the discussion taking place there. This compels me to appeal direct to yourself in the matter.

My proposal for the debate with you had reference to Birmingham, and I must ask you to nominate some gentleman in that place who will be interested in forwarding arrangements on your behalf; unless you would prefer to communicate directly with me yourself, which would be more satisfactory. Yours respectfully,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER,

19th March, 1876.

ROBERT ROBERTS, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Mr. Bradlaugh has forwarded me your letter of the 10th inst. And lest you should deem me wanting in courtesy, I acknowledge yours of the 10th inst to myself, and in doing so, take the opportunity of reviewing the case as it stands, or as it appears to me.

I was anxious, upon hearing it announced publicly before a large audience here "that you were prepared to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in public debate, upon the question, 'Is the Bible true?'" to bring about such debate if possible, and I waited upon the gentleman who made the announcement, for that purpose. This, sir, I take to be the first action in this matter. This was in January, and on the 31st Mr. B. communicated to me his consent.

Your first letter upon the subject bears date February 18th, in which you state in reference to the place where the debate should take place, "the majority of my friends would prefer Birmingham: I presume this would not be objectionable to you, but in this you will speak your mind." Mr. Bradlaugh has spoken his mind—and having left the matter in my hands, I—being the first who communicated with him upon the subject, do most decidedly object to your presumption in fixing upon Birmingham.

I acknowledge that I may—and I think rightly—be an "obstacle" in the way of the debate taking place in any town, until we have had the satisfaction or opportunity of hearing it in the town where the announcement was made. If anything can be done towards this end, I will willingly work. If not I will have nothing to do with it, and can only conclude that you were not prepared. But if you say "I shall be prepared between now and the end of the year to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in Leicester," I will consider it settled, and shall be glad to be informed thereof. I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

WILLIAM HENRY HOLYOAK.

SEA SIDE,

24th March, 1876.

MR. HOLYOAK, DEAR SIR.—Yours is forwarded to me. I have already expressed my mind on the contents of your note. Having nothing to add, our correspondence must now close.

I address Mr. Bradlaugh direct by this post. Respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

25th March, 1876.

MR. BRADLAUGH. DEAR SIR.—I pray you to pardon me for troubling you again, but it seems necessary.

My correspondence with Mr. Holyoak has become inextricably complicated by the unofficial action of one of my friends having associated Leicester with my proposal of debate with you. I have, therefore, closed the correspondence, and begin *de novo*, by placing directly before you the proposal I make, which I beg the favour of your accepting or declining directly to myself as the laws of courtesy require.

I offer to meet you in Birmingham for six nights, in support of the affirmation that the Bible is the authentic and reliable record of Divine revelation.

Until you accept the proposal in this general form, I need not say more, but remain, Yours respectfully,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

P.S.—I am at the sea-side, at this writing, but head my letter with my permanent address, which will always find me.

To this letter no answer was received.

The following note meanwhile appeared on the cover of the *Christadelphian*. It is re-published here as presenting Mr. Roberts' reason for pressing for Birmingham.

"S.—The discussion with Bradlaugh seems likely to fall through owing to that gentleman's refusal, by his agent, Mr. Holyoak, to hold the discussion in Birmingham. He insists on Leicester, where his friends are numerous. This interposes a barrier on our part, since one principal object in consenting to challenge Bradlaugh was to make a discussion with him useful in delivering the truth from the imputation of infidelity, in a town where the truth is better known than in any other, as the result of many years' proclamation, but in which nevertheless, it has that prejudice to encounter. A discussion with Bradlaugh would be a great effort for our peculiar physical liabilities; and we should not feel justified in venturing upon it without some commensurate object such as we have mentioned. In any other town but Birmingham, unless it be London, we should fail to realise sufficient incentive; for we have no hope of benefiting the class of minds who have embraced Secularism. Our aim would be to serve the truth. Having to serve it in many ways we cannot afford to incur the physical risk of an encounter with Bradlaugh without

tangible prospect of good service. Hence our proposal for Birmingham, which Mr. Holyoak declines. If the proposal fall through, we may publish the correspondence."

The following note appeared in the *National Reformer*, of March 26th, among "Answers to Correspondents."

"R. Roberts, Birmingham.—Having in consequence of the action of your own friend placed the matter in the hands of the Leicester Secular Society, we decline to withdraw our authority. Our health does not permit us to engage personally in a lengthy correspondence."

To this, the following answer was sent:—

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

6th April, 1876.

MR. BRADLAUGH. DEAR SIR.—I have only seen for the first time to-day your note in the *National Reformer*, in answer to my letter. I am not a reader of the *Reformer*, but a friend has handed me the issue of March 26th, containing the note in question.

I write to say that I do not propose a correspondence, lengthy or otherwise. I wish you merely to say "Yes" or "No;" will you meet me for a six nights' debate in Birmingham or London on the subject named? Your friends in Birmingham can arrange the details. Awaiting your answer, respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

To this letter, Mr. Bradlaugh sent no reply, but inserted the following note in the *Reformer*.—"R. Roberts, Birmingham.—We really cannot take the matter out of the hands of the Leicester Secular Society."

Mr. Bradlaugh was advertised to lecture in Birmingham on Sunday, April 9th. On that date, Mr. F. Hodgkinson of Peterboro', visiting Birmingham, and observing the fact, expressed a curiosity to see and hear Mr. Bradlaugh. This led to conversation which resulted in a proposal, accepted by Mr. Hodgkinson, that he should attend Mr. Bradlaugh's meeting, and if an opportunity offered, propose a six nights' discussion in Birmingham. Mr. Hodgkinson did so, and at the close of the meeting, being invited to the platform, he read the following written authority:

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

9th April, 1876.

I hereby authorise Mr. Frank Hodgkinson, the bearer of this note, to state in Mr. Bradlaugh's meeting this afternoon, that I am willing to meet Mr. Bradlaugh in Birmingham for six night's debate on the subject:

"Are the Scriptures the Authentic and Reliable Records of Divine Revelation?"

ROBERT ROBERTS.

Mr. Bradlaugh said the challenge having first been delivered in Leicester, he was in duty bound not to disappoint the people there; but he was willing to make this compromise—to have two nights in Leicester and four nights in Birmingham. After the meeting, Mr. Hodgkinson communicated with Mr. Roberts, and sent the following letter to Mr. Bradlaugh, having it placed, by a messenger, in the hands of the chairman of Mr. Bradlaugh's evening meeting, the same day.

64, BELGRAVE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM,

9th April, 1876.

C. BRADLAUGH, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Mr. Roberts accepts your compromise, but with regret that you insist upon a division. Will you inform Mr. Holyoak, and also appoint someone here with whom the arrangements in detail can be made for the two nights in Leicester and four nights in Birmingham? Mr. Roberts accedes to this plan reluctantly, but submits rather than the discussion should fall through. Please reply to me at "Norman Cross, Peterborough."

Yours truly,

FRANK HODGKINSON.

"THE NATIONAL REFORMER," 29, TURNER STREET, COMMERCIAL ROAD, LONDON, E.

10th April, 1876.

FRANK HODGKINSON, Esq. DEAR SIR.—Mine is not a compromise; it is an instance of right. I did not challenge at Leicester; I was challenged there. Mr. W. H. Holyoak will arrange for the two nights' debate at Leicester, and when the dates for these are fixed, Mr. C. C. Cattell, 29, Snow Hill, Birmingham, will be authorised by me to arrange for four further nights at Birmingham. One thing tell Mr. Roberts, that I cannot have a long date. I am ready to debate in May, June, or July. If Mr. Roberts is engaged for these months let him renew his challenge later. I always make lectures give way to debates, but I will not fix a far off date as I might find it bind me inconveniently.

Any further correspondence please address to W. H. Holyoak, as I have not the leisure to make any personal arrangements. Yours sincerely,

C. BRADLAUGH.

Forwarded by W. H. Holyoak, 45, Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

On the receipt of this letter, Mr. Hodgkinson and Mr. Bradlaugh's agents went to work, and arrangements were finally made for the holding of the discussion, in the Temperance Halls of Leicester and Birmingham, on June 18th, 14th, 15th; 20th, 21st and 22nd.

The discussion was largely attended throughout. The report is from the notes of short-hand writers who were engaged for the discussion—revised by the speakers.

Towards the close of the discussion Mr. Bradlaugh sold his interest in the report to Mr. Hodgkinson, who now publishes the same, in conjunction with Mr. Roberts, who avails himself of the opportunity thus secured, of adding a review of the discussion, for the notice of some things in Mr. Bradlaugh's speeches there was no time to notice during the discussion, and for the supply of some things on the affirmative side, he was obliged from the same cause to omit. That the cause of impartiality may not suffer, Mr. Roberts will offer Mr. Bradlaugh the opportunity of writing a rejoinder to his review, for publication in the same pamphlet.

Readers will be in a better position to judge of the debate than hearers. Mr. Bradlaugh's loud voice and animated delivery, made an impression which it may be found his arguments fail to sustain. On the other hand, the arguments on behalf of the Bible may be found to have more weight than they seemed to have in the heat of controversy.

The issue debated is the most important of the questions that engage public attention. The discussion is published, not as an exhaustive, or even a moderately thorough canvass of the subject, but merely as a passing contribution to its consideration, which may help to draw to the subject some of the attention which it ought to receive at the hands of rational men.

Birmingham, 27th June, 1876.

ROBERT ROBERTS.

SIX NIGHTS' DISCUSSION.

First Night,

TUESDAY, 13th JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, LEICESTER.

THE CHAIR WAS OCCUPIED BY MR. W. STANYON OF LEICESTER.

THE CHAIRMAN having stated the order of proceedings, and asked the meeting to restrain the manifestation of their feelings, he called upon Mr. Roberts to open the Debate.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I would not have been so bold as to encounter a man of Mr. Bradlaugh's ability had it not been for two things—a persuasion of the invulnerable strength of the cause which I have to maintain this evening, and a deep sense of the unspeakable consequence of the matter to be debated; and perhaps I ought to add a third—a conception of the duty that rests upon everybody holding the convictions which I represent, to avail themselves of every opportunity of impressing those convictions upon others. With regard to the first of these points, there may, probably, be a great many here present who will not agree with me; with regard to the second, I should scarcely think there can be present one who will say that it is unimportant whether or no there be a hope of a better life for mankind than they have now, whether there is or is not ever to be a better state of things upon the earth than there is at the present time. I will not waste much time in discussing that point: all will agree that the question is one of vital moment, and, if my side of the question be the right one, then we have a good matter to realise—a matter so good as to justify the rapturous exclamation which we find in the Scriptures, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace!” while, if the position represented by Mr. Bradlaugh be the right one, the skull, cross-bones, coffins, dust, corruption, despair, brood over the entire prospects of every man who has ever lived upon earth, or ever will live. The real question to which I have to address myself is the first one—the question as to whether or no the position I represent, be of the invulnerable strength which I assert it to be; and upon that I feel no quailing. There is no test that can be applied to the Scriptures but will yield the one result which I shall seek to make manifest to your understanding, whether we regard it in the light of the circumstances that ought to exist in the world if the Bible be true; or with respect to the historic harmony that ought to subsist between this book, if it be true, and the records of mankind; or in the light of its intrinsic character; whether we consider the character of its histories; whether we consider the nature of its prophecies in relation to the accomplished history of man; whether we consider it with regard to the sentiment that animates it from beginning to end, we cannot fail, by a logical construction of the facts of the case, to arrive at the conclusion that the Bible is no human production. Upon all these points I have every confidence in being able to make manifest the justice of my contention—that is, that these Scriptures are the authentic and the reliable records of Divine revelation.

But we must proceed by stages. I have but one fear—and perhaps before the discussion is concluded you will see how well-founded that fear is—that I shall be unable to crowd into a six nights' debate the host of arguments, the mass of evidence, which I can adduce in support of the proposition which I stand here to affirm. I must be content to do what is possible, and, in a hurried, condensed, and sketchy way, to rehearse before you the reasons, which I am convinced must be regarded as conclusive in favour of my affirmation by any logical mind acquainted with all the facts, and taking time enough, under a sense of the importance characterising the subject, to consider those facts. I shall divide the argument into six sections, corresponding with the six nights during which we shall be together. I shall contend to-night that the state of affairs now existing in the world is in harmony with the view that the Bible is the Word of God, and inconsistent with the notion that it is the production of ignorant and fanatical men. Further, to-night I will try to show that, if there is a book circulating among men whose authenticity can be demonstrated, it is this entire volume. I confine not my remarks to the writings of the apostles. I apply it also to the writings of the prophets and Moses himself, notwithstanding all the perverse erudition that has been brought to bear in our age to try to displace Moses from the confidence of the people. But I will say, and perhaps ought to say, before proceeding, that while entertaining that strong view, there is some pity to be entertained for men in Mr. Bradlaugh's position, because there are circumstances that justify, or appear upon the surface to justify, the conclusion to which they have come. There is a dark, a corrupt, an inhuman, a degraded, a dreadful, history to look back upon during the past eighteen centuries, and, if you make the Bible responsible for that history, you have a good argument against it; but it will not require a very extensive argument to show that there is no connection between the corruptions of Papal domination in Europe and these holy oracles. There is also extant in the world, and established under many circumstances of influence and importance, a set of doctrines which, if true—which, if the teaching of the Bible, I grant would also constitute a difficulty in receiving them, and might justify the unbelievers in the position which they have assumed. I will then, on the second night—which will be to-morrow night—contend that the unquestionable facts connected with the establishment of Christianity in the world in the first century, including the history and the character of Christ, are incapable of being explained on any rational principle, if Christ did not rise from the dead, and if the apostles were impostors. On the third night I will contend that the single case of the apostle Paul, when all the facts of his unimpeachable history are distinctly realised and logically construed, is sufficient of itself to prove the divinity of Christ, and, therefore, of the whole of the Scriptures of which the record of his case constitutes a part. On the fourth night I will contend that the literary and moral peculiarities of the Bible, the character of its sentiments, so entirely alien to the universal tendencies of human nature, Jew and Gentile; its clear, chaste, vigorous, and concise diction; its agreement one part with another throughout, notwithstanding the great intervals of time at which its different parts were composed; its perfectly artless candour in the record of facts, irrespective of the bearing of those facts for or against its main contention, are totally at variance with the supposition that the book is the production of ignorant and designing men, and proves that its production is due to that divine guidance and initiative in the writers to which both Paul and Peter, and others as well, attribute it. On the fifth night I will contend that the history of the Jewish race, particularly as involving the character and career of Moses, cannot be explained on the Freethinker's hypothesis of the Bible; but, on the contrary, is an irrefragable proof of its Divine character and authorship. On the last night I will contend that the prophecies of the Bible—so explicit, so sober, so useful in their character, being in this respect so unlike the vague, incoherent, irrational predictions of the Greek augurs and other contemporary pretenders—are an evidence of the divinity of the authorship of the Bible, an evidence which becomes simply overwhelming when we consider their fulfilment in the accomplished history of mankind.

I am not about to deny that there are difficulties; I will not deny that there are obscurities; but I do contend that those difficulties, and those obscurities, are not

inconsistent with the main conclusion deducible from those extensive premisses which I have indicated in that synopsis of the argument for this six nights' debate. I contend that those are rather in the nature of the apparent inconsistencies which arise in all cases, and in every matter, for there is no argument, there is no question, there is no character, there is no book, there is no case, in connection with which a hostile ingenuity is not able to create apparent discrepancies, and to lay hold of, perhaps, real discrepancies on the surface, and to make an apparently successful use of them in an antagonistic sense; but I will admit this, that in all true cases the apparent anomalies, and contradictions, and discrepancies, ought to be capable of reconciliation with the main drift of the proof. In fact, this is the sort of test in every case that comes before a court of law. There are always two sides to every case, and, when argued by capable men, the argument on each side is so plausible as to bewilder the jury and disqualify them for coming to a confident conclusion; but a judicial analysis of the evidence, is able to point out that the positive proof points one way, and that the other, which points in the opposite way, can be explained in harmony with the positive evidence, though it may appear to be in contradiction to it; whereas, the other side of the question, when sifted in the same judicial and impartial manner by the judge, cannot be so explained or reconciled in harmony with the bulk of the evidence. And that is the nature of the case to-night, and throughout this entire debate, that the positive evidence is all one way. There are points of difficulty and there are obscurities, but there are no points of difficulty, there are no obscurities, which I am afraid to face. There are things which appear to be difficulties, but which, nevertheless, disappear upon a thorough examination.

I will begin the argument to-night, that is to say, at the point at which we now stand—1876. If the Bible is true, there ought to be Jews; if the Bible is true, there ought to be a corrupt Christianity as the basis of the political system of Europe. If Mr. Bradlaugh should afterwards ask me to prove these two propositions, I will; but, meanwhile, I will take them for granted: they are so self-evident to those who know the Scriptures; and, therefore, I will simply ask, Are there Jews? Is there a political Christianity in the world? With regard to the first item, at all events, no one will hesitate in the answer; the Jews exist everywhere throughout the world, in all civilised countries. You will see the importance of that point if you consider with what pointed effect Mr. Bradlaugh might have asked this question; had there been no Jews, he might have said: "In the prophecies of Jeremiah it is said, God will never make an end of the Jewish nation;" and he might have said, Where are the Jews?" The Bible does say that, and there the Jews are. So far, therefore, I contend that the state of facts is in harmony with the hypothesis that the Bible is true. And I will also contend that the continued existence of the Jewish race under the terrible circumstances which have characterised their history during the past 1,800 years was a greatly improbable thing; that a race without national organisation, without a capital, and scattered among every nation under heaven, should have continued to retain its racial identity, what a highly improbable thing! The existence of corrupt Christianity, foretold in the Scriptures, is the great fact in the European system of the present day, for what is the most conspicuous feature of that system but the one against which Mr. Bradlaugh, and many others in this country, are now directing their energies—the union of Church and State? They are aiming to procure the separation of Church and State. Why, that very endeavour is evidence of the correspondence between the theory of the Bible's truth and the existing state of facts, in so far as the Bible's prophecies require such a system to exist in the present day. We may at a later stage of the discussion, have to look at this matter a little more closely; but meanwhile, it is sufficient as a starting point to show that the existing state of things in the world is such as it ought to be on the hypothesis of the Bible being the Word of God.

Let us now go backwards, and ask whether there is evidence of the authenticity of these books; and I will take the last part of the Bible in the first part of the argument, because, if I establish the argument with regard to the last part, I establish it with regard to the first, though I will argue the first also upon its separate merits. The writings of the apostles: are they the writings of the apostles? I do not know exactly what position Mr. Bradlaugh will take upon this question; and, therefore, so far as he is concerned, I must argue somewhat in the

dark; but nevertheless, with regard to the main question, there need be no difficulty; and there is none. The evidence is so extensive upon the point, that it is difficult to condense it into the few sentences that remain of my half-hour. Nevertheless, it is capable of being condensed in a forcible manner. I will not waste time in arguing that the Bible was not produced last century, or a thousand years ago. Mr. Bradlaugh—or, at all events, the party he represents—have abandoned their first theory of the question, that is to say they now no longer contend that the Bible is a monkish production of the fourth and fifth centuries, for literary labours have exhumed book after book, document after document, and the investigation of them has been conducted with such complete effect as to dissipate the possibility of such a theory being sustained, and to prove that the second part of the Bible was produced in the beginning of the Christian era, and the first part in the ages antecedent to that, at the several times at which it professes to have been produced. Let me give you a specimen of the kind of evidence I am referring to. There are the writings of Tertullian, a writer of the second century. In the middle of the second century, he takes cognisance of the fact that these books were in circulation at that time, under the several names which they now bear, and among the people to whom they purport to have been originally addressed. He says:

“Come now, thou who desirest better to exercise thy curiosity in that which relates to thy salvation. Go through the apostolic churches, in which the chairs of the apostles preside in their places, in which their authentic letters are recited, resounding the voice and representing the face of each one. Is Achaia near thee? thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi, thou hast Thessalonica. If thou canst direct thy course into Asia, thou hast Ephesus. But if thou art near Italy, thou hast Rome, whence authority is ready at hand for us also.”

Now, that takes you back to the middle of the second century—that is to say, if you credit Tertullian, as I presume you will, for I do not suppose that Mr. Bradlaugh will call in question the authenticity of that deliverance of Tertullian written in the second century; I say that it takes us back to that period of time from which we look back to an even earlier time, when it was a matter of common notoriety that there were present at Philippi, Corinth, and other cities, where they were then in circulation, letters of Paul which were at that time recognised as having been written by Paul. But we can go further back than that, for there is a genuine letter extant of one Clement of Rome, who is claimed by the Roman Catholic Church to have been the first Pope; we need not consider that, because Clement did not consider himself a Pope, and he was not one. But he wrote a letter to the Corinthian Church. These were troublous times for those who professed the faith of Christ; it subjected them to all the evils to which men can possibly be subjected; and the Corinthians, suffering also from disagreements amongst themselves, wrote to Clement of Rome, the Clement referred to by Paul in his letter to the Romans, asking his advice how they should do. Now, in his letter—which I have with me here, if it be at all doubted, and I think the date of this letter of Clement's is somewhere about the end of the first century; I do not remember the year exactly, but it was before the century was out—he says to the Corinthians, “Ye have Paul's letter; ye know what he says there,” and he also makes a quotation from the letter to the Romans, which Paul addressed to that community. That is to say, within forty years of the time that Paul is alleged to have written the letters, these documents are, by the evidence I am now adducing, proved to have been in circulation amongst those to whom they profess to have been written, and to have been owned by them as the production of the apostle Paul. Now, the force of that argument will be very apparent to those who are acquainted with the nature of the epistle to the Corinthians particularly, for it is a document in which Paul does not speak very complimentarily about them. In it, he tells them they are carnal and walking as men.—(1 Cor. iii. 3.) He says to them in 1st Corinthians xi. 22: “What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.” And in his second epistle to the same Church he speaks to them in the same terms of disagreeable admonition: “Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye [Corinthians] might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do

you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied; and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."—(2 Corinthians xi. 7-9.) Now, the fact that a letter to a community that is condemned in it is still owned by that community as an authentic document, written to them by the alleged writer, is the strongest proof that it is authentic. Imagine a parallel case: suppose Mr. Bradlaugh writes a letter to some Secularist Society, blowing them up for some course they are taking, and they treasure this letter amongst their archives as a thing precious to be preserved, and forty years afterwards it is found in their hands, every member of them consenting to the proposition that that was Mr. Bradlaugh's letter; would that not be evidence of the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh had written it? This is the kind of evidence that exists in this particular case, as applicable not only to this letter to the Corinthians, but to the other letters of the apostles. The authenticity of the Four Gospels is proved in the same way. I think it is Justin Martyr, in a book addressed to the Roman Emperor of the day, in his *Apology* for Christianity, that alludes to them in a form of speech, which clearly identifies the Four Gospels as being that to which he is alluding. Origen, I think, also alludes to the Four Gospels. There are other contemporary allusions of the same description, which I refer to merely to show this—that the gospels have a sufficient contemporary recognition to commend them to our confidence, so far as such recognition can do so; for when we come to the merits of the thing itself, when we come to look into the constitution of the New Testament, we do not require any outside evidence whatever. I require it not for my own individual conviction, but nevertheless people are generally more susceptible to impression from these foreign sources than from the nature of the thing itself. The allusions I am now referring to are evidence that in the beginning of the Christian era the letters of Paul and the Four Gospels were in circulation amongst those who knew whether or no they were authentic documents.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: The proposition which Mr. Roberts has undertaken to prove in this debate is, that "the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation;" and, so far as this debate is concerned, you have nothing whatever to do with what persons of Mr. Bradlaugh's class may have urged at some other time, the more especially as there would be probably great difference of opinion as to who were the proper people to put in under that designation, and we should only be entering into a collateral debate, which would have nothing to do with the real question at issue. I will ask Mr. Roberts to be kind enough, in every text he quotes, to give me chapter and verse, because it will be convenient both to myself and to the audience. We have only had one loose reference to Jeremiah, and I have been wandering a little through the book, finding some things, perhaps, Mr. Roberts won't think applicable, but which I shall have to use, if they suit me, in the course of this debate. Then I ask him also, if he quotes an author outside the Bible, to be good enough not to say "about" the time he lived, because on that we shall have great difference of opinion, but to state the time he thinks he did live, and the authorities upon which he bases that statement, because it is for him to produce his witnesses, and for him to verify them. Next I will ask him when he says Justin Martyr says this, or Origen says that, to be kind enough to refer me to the particular work, to the particular book, to the particular chapter, and, if it have sections, to the particular section; and, if it be a book that don't happen to be translated in English, to the particular version, because there will be a misfortune about some of his witnesses, that they don't always say the same things in different versions and languages; and, if he is right in his representation of Justin Martyr, I am most unfortunate, because no edition of Justin Martyr I have ever read has got a solitary word capable of the construction he has put upon it. Of course, it is possible that Mr. Roberts may quote to me some particular book of Justin Martyr's that I have overlooked, and it would be my duty to look it up in such a case; but if he simply uses round words, without giving express statements, I must say that his witnesses are too general even to be touched; and, when he talks of "contemporary writers," will he permit me to suggest that Clement of Rome, Origen, and Justin Martyr are very awkward instances of contemporary authors? Now, these are only little points; but still, if we understand what we mean about them as we go along, it will very

much clear the way. Now the burden of the proof lies upon Mr. Roberts. He has not told us—although what he has undertaken to prove is that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation—even what he means by the Scriptures. I shall assume, for the purposes of this debate, that he means the ordinary authorised English version, beginning with the Book of Genesis, and ending with the Book of Revelation; and supposing that should not happen to be right—because it may turn out to be wrong—then I will ask my antagonist, Mr. Roberts, to kindly explain to us what else he means; and, if he means anything else but this, why he means something else, and why we are to reject this version, and why we should take something else. I heard him say something about “perverse erudition,” but as I make no pretensions to special learning, I shall, therefore, try to confine myself as nearly as I can to authors that are entirely within the reach of all of us; but I ask Mr. Roberts not to refrain, on account of my ignorance, from going to any learned author he likes. It is my duty to be prepared to examine every witness he offers. Then having assumed that those (pointing to the English Bible) are the Scriptures, I will ask what is meant—because he did not tell us—by the words “Divine Revelation,” and I may say at once that I have never contended, that I do not contend, and I do not know any decently-educated man who does contend, that the whole of this Bible is the work either of “ignorant and fanatical” men, or, to use his other phrase, of “ignorant and designing” men. On the contrary, the contention that I should submit to you would be that the Bible, like many other books, is a collection of the works of different men in different ages, many of the earlier books in it being simply collections of, or collections founded on the works of still earlier writers, differing with the ages out of which they grew and with the men whose ideas more or less accurately we get in some of them; added to, curtailed, interlined, abbreviated, augmented, according to the fashions and whims and myths and superstitions of the different ages through which they have come down to us; and I do not pretend that at any particular date some class of ignorant and designing men forged a whole book, which they called the Bible, for the purpose of deceiving the people; such would simply be an absurd contention. If Mr. Roberts will address himself to the proving what lies on him, and not to the answering of what I do not urge, it will save a great deal of time. Now, the question assumes the existence of a Deity capable of making a revelation; and if I were not content, for the purpose of this debate, to assume this, I should not be here; but, as I happen to be an Atheist—although for the purposes of this debate I am quite content to assume a divinity capable of making a revelation—it is necessary I should be told what attributes are claimed for that Deity. Now, Mr. Roberts has refrained from saying a word on that subject. While he alleges that it is Divine revelation, he has not told us what he means by “Divinity,” and clearly all people do not agree on that; the Mahomedans and Buddhists have a different view from Mr. Roberts. It is not simply myself, but out of the fourteen hundred millions of people in the world, probably thirteen hundred millions, and some ninety-nine millions and a few odd thousands, would have a different view from that put forward by Mr. Roberts, so that it is necessary that he should tell us what attributes he attributes to the Deity; and I shall, for the purpose of this debate, attribute to the Deity the following attributes; and if Mr. Roberts objects to any of them, he is perfectly entitled to strike any of them out if he will kindly say why, and give you the attributes he prefers—omnipotence, all-goodness, omnipresence, omniscience, including in this foreknowledge, immutability, infinity, eternity, personality. Now, if any of those attributes are objectionable, I shall be glad to hear Mr. Roberts strike out those he thinks wrong. I should not have ventured to state them at all if Mr. Roberts had fulfilled his duty at the commencement. And then I say, that that book cannot be a divine revelation which in any of its contents contradicts any one of those attributes. I say, if I find within the four corners of this book anything contradicting specifically any one of those attributes, I say that then the book as a whole—because it is as a whole that we are dealing with it—ceases to be capable of proof by Mr. Roberts as the divine revelation he pretends. I am not using the word “pretend” in any unfair sense, but simply as meaning the contention he is bound to maintain. Then I say that a divine revelation ought not to be self-contradictory, and if in addition, or if, having failed in showing that it contradicts the attributes, I show that the book is in any

portion of it self-contradictory, I say that then I destroy its claim to be considered a divine revelation. Now, on this, it is possible that the contention Mr. Roberts foreshadowed may arise. He says he will admit, if I understood him rightly, that hostile ingenuity may perhaps lay hold of real contradictions on the surface. Well, now, I should submit to you that, *primâ facie*, that book cannot be a revelation from God to man, from which hostile ingenuity to a simple mind may show what would be by that hostile ingenuity sufficient contradiction to compel the simple mind to reject it; I say that it ought not to need the acute brain of a gentleman like Mr. Roberts to explain God's revelation; that God Himself ought to have made it quite clear if He intended its reception, and that there ought not to be any contradictions either on the surface or anywhere else. Well, then, I submit to you that contradiction on the surface is a contradiction, and that adding the words "on the surface" do not make it any less a contradiction; and, then, if I should be told that that simply means that it is a contradiction on the surface of the English, but if you go to some other language it is to be explained away, then I will ask Mr. Roberts whether any sort of penalty attaches in his mind to the reception or rejection of divine revelation, and, if so, in what language the penalty is going to be inflicted? because it is extremely awkward; take it that there are in the world some eighty millions of people, in round numbers, speaking English; supposing it requires a knowledge of some other language instead of English to comprehend the revelation, and to get rid of the inconsistencies, it is extremely awkward for those who have been born to speak English, and that would of itself seem a fatal objection against the possibility of the book being a revelation; that God should have sent it in one language, while He requires it to be believed in another. And I will ask Mr. Roberts also to tell us—because he has, although telling us to-night he should deal with the present time, he has gone 1,600 or 1,700 years back in a jump—I will ask him to tell us, for my guidance, what he considers to be the original language of each of the books; the date at which he considers each of the books respectively to have been revealed, and to whom, and the evidence in support of each of those propositions. Then I will urge to you, supposing we get over those little points, that a Divine revelation ought not to be inconsistent with itself, and ought not to be inconsistent with science, and that such inconsistencies exist will be the case that I shall try to make out. Now, in the speech which we have just listened to, there are one or two points, not of argument, because it appears to me that my friend had overlooked, so far as the opening speech was concerned, what was the subject of debate. He addressed some few words, which might have been appropriate (supposing they had been substantiated) to the question. Did the Four Gospels and the writings of the apostles exist in the second century? But I heard nothing that was appropriate to anything else, and that would only be a very limited stage of the inquiry. He said something about "If Mr. Bradlaugh's views be correct, skull, crossbones, and corruption brood over everybody." Well, now, that solemn absurdity scarcely frightened me. At first I did not know which of my views Mr. Roberts was referring to, for I have expressed views on a great many subjects. I have some views on politics, I have some views on political economy, and it did occur to me that what we were to debate was, not what are Mr. Bradlaugh's views in general, but the proposition: "Are the Scriptures the Authentic and Reliable Records of Divine Revelation?" So that although the skull, and crossbones, and corruption, may have some remote reference to Mr. Bradlaugh's views when they are under debate, I will submit to you the only views of Mr. Bradlaugh that Mr. Roberts has a right to deal with in this discussion, are those I put forward on this platform, and no others. Mr. Roberts has been good enough to state, and I thank him for the frankness of the admission, that there should be historic harmony, if the Bible be true, between records purporting to be historic in this book, and the records, so far as we can get them, of humanity; and I shall ask Mr. Roberts to show that there is such harmony especially in relation to the records of the Egyptians; and I will ask him whether it is not admitted, by nearly every person with a pretence to scholarship, that the Hebrew chronology is so sadly deficient that it does not make allowance within many centuries for the period necessary for verified Egyptian civilization. This is one point to which I will ask Mr. Roberts to direct his attention. Then Mr. Roberts appeals to the sentiment which, he says, animates the book from

beginning to end. Will he kindly tell me what that sentiment is, for I avow I do not know. I am ready to show that there are, at least, fifty contradictory sentiments. I will show you a sentiment of mercy, a sentiment of cruelty, a sentiment of love, a sentiment of hatred, a sentiment of freedom, a sentiment of slavery, a sentiment in favour of monarchy, and a sentiment against it; and I ask, therefore, for some kind of clue to what Mr. Roberts means. I do not pretend that he has not got a clear meaning in his own mind; I only want to know what it is, so that I may fairly reply to it. Mr. Roberts says that his reasons are such as ought to convince any logical mind. Well, that is a great comfort, because there are certainly some logical minds in the audience, and when we hear the reasons, you will be able to judge them. And then he occupied some time about what he was going to do during the six nights. I shall confine myself to that alone to-night, because it will save us a considerable waste of time; and what he undertook to prove to-night was that the state of affairs now existing in the world is consistent with the view that the Bible is a revelation from God, and not the work of ignorant and fanatical men. Now, I do not contend it is the work of ignorant and fanatical men. And, next I contend that the whole of the rest is utterly irrelevant until Mr. Roberts has explained to us what he means by divine revelation, and all about it. Then Mr. Roberts says there is some pity to be felt for me in my position. Well, now that is very kind. I always like a nice feeling to exist with anybody with whom I come in contact. It is the first time I have met with Mr. Roberts. Pity is akin to love, and no one knows but what the extension of the feeling of pity may so influence him that he may become a member of the National Secular Society. But an ounce of evidence is worth two tons of pity, and we have not yet had the ounce. And then he says that certain things are not explicable on the Freethinker's hypothesis. It will be time enough for Mr. Roberts to take the Freethinker's hypothesis from me in this debate, and not manufacture a man of straw for the purpose of killing it; it will save a great waste of time. Then he urges that there are difficulties and obscurities which may exist. "Difficulties and obscurities" in God's revelation to human kind! Could God have prevented those difficulties and obscurities, and made them clearer, or could He not? And, then, I will also ask him, so that I may not be misled, chapter and verse, to kindly give me a list of the difficulties and obscurities. I will then not need to press upon them at all. I am sure, with that frankness which characterises every one who wants to believe in the Bible as a Divine revelation, now that Mr. Roberts has told you there are difficulties and obscurities, he will have no hesitation in giving a list of them. Then I will ask him, when he has given that list, to tell us in each case whether he could have made it more clear. If he cannot, then I will ask him whether that is not a fatal difficulty at once; and if he says "Yes," I will ask him how he holds that an All-wise and Omnipotent God has given us an obscure revelation, which he (Mr. Roberts) could have made clearer. Then he says that the positive evidence is all one way; with that I am quite agreed; the only difficulty is, we are disagreed as to on which side that evidence is to be found. And then there is another difficulty, that we do not understand the word "evidence" in the same way. Mr. Roberts, having to prove something about the state of affairs now existing, quotes, with extreme looseness, Tertullian, and Clement of Rome, and Justin Martyr. Well, that may be some evidence when we get to what it is. But if he were to confine himself to-night to the state of affairs now existing, I don't know what relation it bears to the matter. Then, he says, the Jews exist, and Jeremiah says something about them; Jeremiah says a good many things about them; he says something about the prophets prophesying falsely and telling lies. In the 23rd of Jeremiah you will find a great deal about the prophets lying. Will my friend tell me how much of the prophecies are lies, and how I am to distinguish the lies from the truth, and separate them? Well, then, I want to know why the Jews existing should be more evidence to the truth of the Bible, than the Mahomedans existing to the truth of the Koran, or the Brahmins existing for their sacred books, or the Buddhists for theirs. I do not say that the argument is utterly irrelevant, but fail to appreciate its relevancy for the moment. Well, then, he says, if the Bible be true, there ought to be corrupt Christians. Well, I shall be obliged if he will give me the exact chapter and verse on which he relies, show me the exact date at which he thinks that

chapter and verse came out, and then leave me to deal with them. And then he talks about the writings of the apostles? and says "Are they the writings of the apostles?" and says Mr. Bradlaugh's class have abandoned their first contention, that the book is a monkish production of the fourth and fifth centuries. Well, I never made that contention yet. I will tell you what I have said: that, as far as the Hebrew Bible is concerned, the whole work of the Massorah, which gives the Bible its meaning in that language to-day, cannot be carried back to a date earlier than about that period. But that is a very different thing from saying that the whole Bible is a monkish production of the fourth and fifth centuries; and I have never abandoned that, and scholarship has never refuted it, and I am ready to prove it. But there is a great deal to be done before we get to that; Mr. Roberts has got to make out some revelation to be challenged, and he has not yet presented any at all. Then he has vaguely referred you to Tertullian. Now I object to vague references, because I am prepared to show you, from the writings of Origen, which have been quoted in the same loose fashion, that, if Origen be true, the Scriptures cannot be true, for that Origen makes statements with reference to Bible facts which are not to be found in any page of the Bible at all. I did not dream that we were to have the apostolic fathers to-night; but I may also say that we have not had them, for the references have been so funny, that I have been puzzled as to what was meant. For example, the letter of Clement of Rome has been put to you. Why, Mr. Roberts well knows that the whole of the writings attributed to Clement of Rome, whether his first epistle or second, have all been challenged; that, instead of being able to identify the author of what is called the first epistle of Clement with the person who is claimed to have been the Bishop of Rome, that there is the utmost uncertainty about it; and that in an edition of the Nicene Fathers published in the present day, that very statement is made by the editors of it. Now, I tell Mr. Roberts that I have at least taken the pains to learn the A B C of this argument; therefore, I ask him to give the chapter and verse of every author he quotes. I do not know that there is contemporary evidence of the existence of the four gospels in the alleged writings of the apostle Paul; and I say that, if there were ever so much evidence, you would not be one step nearer proving the question, "Are these Scriptures the authentic record of the Divine revelation?" You would not be near it at all; it is with the contents you have got to deal, the contents of which you have got to examine their teachings. But I urge to you that the whole of the times between the date of the alleged appearance of the writings attributed to Clement and the writings attributed to Origen are simply filled up with hosts of forgeries, are filled up with hosts of frauds, the bulk of which have had to be abandoned; and I say that state of things could not possibly have existed had there been the real and true evidence which Mr. Roberts would like to have to quote. Now, I will give him just one or two texts, and I will ask him whether, referring to Ex. xxxii. 7-14, I am to find there a fair representation of the character of Deity. The historian there states that God, having chosen Aaron as His priest, while God was choosing him, Aaron made another god for the Jews to worship; that God became angry about it, said to Moses, "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may destroy this people;" that Moses remonstrated with God, and argued Him out of it, and then God plagued the people for making the calf that Aaron had made (verse 35). And I say again, look at chap. xxviii., verses 1, 2 and 3, and tell me whether I am to take that as a fair representation of the character of Deity; and, then, at Numb. xxiii. 19, at Sam. xv. 29, at Mal. iii. 6, which represents that God cannot repent and cannot change; and then I will draw his attention to 2 Kings xx. 1; 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16; Gen. vi. 6; 1 Sam. xv. 11, which show that God did repeatedly repent and change. Now, the chairman warns me that I have just got to the end of my time, and I submit to you, in concluding, that, up to the present moment, there has not been a particle of evidence of any kind advanced by Mr. Roberts in support of his proposition, nor has he given us such an explanation of it as will enable us to understand what he meant by it.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I have now great pleasure in calling upon Mr. Roberts to occupy a quarter of an hour, adopting, if he likes, the Socratic method, and putting questions to Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. Bradlaugh at once to reply.

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

Mr. Bradlaugh, do you believe that there ever existed such a man as Jesus Christ?—I do not believe that there ever existed such a man as Jesus Christ, with the history recorded of him in the Four Gospels. It is quite possible that a man named Jesus, not having such history, may have existed.

Then, do I understand you to say that the Christ, who is the subject of the Four Gospels and of Paul's letters, is a historical myth?—I say that that which is represented as the history of Jesus in the Four Gospels and the Epistles is not the history of a real man.

Then I return to my question : do you believe that the man spoken of by Paul, for instance, who says he saw him and laid down his life for him, never existed?—Will you refer me to the exact chapter and verse?

1st Cor. xv. 8, "Last of all he was seen of me also."—I have no means of judging whether Paul wrote that or not ; therefore cannot answer as to Paul.

That is the chapter and verse you asked for?—You ask me as to Paul's evidence. My answer is, that I have no means of judging whether Paul wrote that or not.

Then, do you say that the Christ Paul spoke about is a historical myth?—I don't know that I have any evidence that Paul spoke of any Christ at all. If you will refer to Corinthians, and, instead of saying Paul, say the writer of the epistle to the Corinthians, I will answer your question.

Do you believe in the authenticity of the history written by Eusebius?—I believe that Eusebius did live and write, and wrote a great many falsehoods.

Do you admit that he was the writer of the history we now have as the history of Eusebius?—Are you speaking of the volume known as Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*?

I speak of his works.—Then I will ask you to specify particularly which of the works.

For my question it is not necessary to speak of any work in particular.—Then I decline to answer a general question. I will answer specifically as to each work of Eusebius I am asked about ; my reason for refusing to answer generally is, that in the whole of those centuries, forged writings abounded, and I must confine my answer to the evidence that is presented.

Mr. Bradlaugh, you have admitted that Eusebius wrote?—I never denied it ; it is not a question of admitting it : I believe Eusebius did live and did write.

That is my question and the answer to it. Please define to me in a sentence the principle upon which you are persuaded that Eusebius ever lived and ever wrote?—Only that in examining ordinary events, my confidence is given to the best experience of the best men, and that in the case of Eusebius I have no reason to doubt from their investigation that a man named Eusebius did live and did write, and that, in addition, he often forged.

Then I wish to ask whether the reason which you deem sufficient to justify you in believing in Eusebius and his writings does not exist as strongly, and more strongly, in the case of Paul?—No.

Do you mean to say that there is less contemporary evidence to the fact that Paul's writings were received as a literary production?—Which do you call Paul's writings?

I am now speaking of the portion of his epistles included in our common Bible?—I will ask you, then, to specify them by name.

Then I will take the first of Corinthians, for example, and I ask whether there is not the same evidence, and more evidence, in proof of the fact that Paul wrote the 1st of Corinthians than there is in proof that Eusebius wrote his "History"?—No.

What evidence have you that Eusebius wrote his "History"?—I am not here to prove that Eusebius wrote his "History ;" if I were, I should be prepared to prove it.

You have admitted that you believe it ; I ask you the reason of your belief?—I have told you that on all ordinary matters I am in the habit of placing my confidence in the best experience of the best men capable of judging of those occurrences, and that I have done so in the case of Eusebius.

Do you mean to say that there are no men capable of judging the same question

with regard to Paul?—That is a very loose question. Do you mean men now or men then?

Men now and men then?—Men then I knew nothing about, and men now I refuse to accept as infallible judges.

Then whose judgment do you accept in the case of Eusebius?—I accept a fairly unbroken line of reference in writers era by era, from the time of Eusebius down to the present time for the opinion I have expressed; but my duty is not to prove that Eusebius wrote, and, therefore, I do not pretend that that which is sufficient now for my belief is sufficient testimony for other people's.

Is there not a fairly unbroken line of references to Paul from the very age of his writing?—No; there are plenty of forgeries from the earlier times which have had to be abandoned.

Will you please say what you mean by a fairly unbroken line of references?—I cannot make it any clearer.

You do not, of course, mean a reference every day?—I did not say so.

Every year?—If I had meant "every year" I should have said so. When I said "fairly unbroken," I meant allowing for the fact that, in some ages, men wrote very little, especially when Christianity was triumphant.

Then you would accept an occasional—and, comparatively speaking, remote—reference in that case?—I have not said so.

You have said that you accept Eusebius on that line of evidence; that there were intervals during which there was little writing, and yet you accept it, and, therefore, you must admit that you accept occasional references in some cases?—Of course it means occasional references.

Then say "Yes."—I am not going to say "Yes" to words you put into my mouth which I do not utter.

It describes what I mean.—But it does not describe what I mean.

You have denied that there is a fairly unbroken line of reference to the apostle Paul?—Oh no; I have denied that there is a fairly unbroken line of reference to the writings which you say are Paul's.

Then do I understand from that answer that you believe that possibly Paul wrote some other writings than these?—I do not know that my belief as to what Paul may possibly have done elsewhere has anything to do with the question.

Your belief is what I am testing.—You have a right to test my belief so far as it affects the question, and not a bit outside it.

Precisely; and that is just what I am doing; and I ask whether, in your opinion, possibly Paul wrote other writings which are not here?—I have not an opinion on the matter.

Do you mean to say that you have come to so grave a conclusion that these are not Paul's writings without forming an opinion on such a point as that?—I have not even advanced that conclusion, I think. The burden of proof lies on you. I have only to deny. I deny that you have advanced any evidence of it.

Then I ask whether you believe or deny that the 1st epistle to the Corinthians was written by the apostle Paul?—I have no evidence connecting the person whom you call the apostle Paul with that epistle.

Have you a conviction on the subject one way or other?—As a mere matter of conviction, there were so many forgeries that I am inclined to believe he had nothing to do with it; but I do not want to deny that which I have not sufficient evidence to entitle me to deny. What I do deny is, that you can bring the epistle you call the Epistle to the Corinthians within one hundred years of the date at which you say Paul lived.

Then do you mean to say that possibly we are right in believing this to have been written by Paul?—I do not know what evidence you believe it upon.

That is not my question?—I have nothing to do with the possibilities of your being right or not. What you have to do here is to prove your case.

My question is this: Is your conviction with regard to the subject of so loose a character, or are your convictions so indefinite, that possibly we may be right in believing that these are the writings of Paul?—On the contrary, my conviction is that you are entirely wrong.

Then do you deny that this was written by the apostle Paul?—I deny that I have yet

seen any evidence to warrant me in coming to the conclusion that the person you call the apostle Paul had anything to do with it.

Have you a definite opinion on it?—If that is not definite enough I do not know the meaning of the English language.

"Yes" or "No" would be definite, and I ask yes or no, do you believe that Paul wrote the 1st epistle to the Corinthians?—No, I do not, as a mere matter of belief.

Are you in doubt about it?—No.

You have said that you are not aware of any allusion to the apostle Paul's 1st epistle to the Corinthians by any writer within a hundred years of Paul's day. I will now read you an allusion, and ask your opinion upon it. I quote from the first letter of Clement, which all competent critics admit to be genuine, though abandoning his second epistle.—I utterly deny that all competent critics admit it to be a genuine letter, and I refuse to answer a question to which that is introduced, because it is utterly untrue.

Well, it is not essential to my question; so I will not repeat it. I will read you this from a letter that is admitted by competent critics to have been written by Clement of Rome.—I beg your pardon; in my speech I positively did deny that. I said not only that there was no evidence of its having been written by Clement of Rome, but that that was practically admitted by the editors of the Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Then I read from this Letter, written, I think, about the year 83.—Will you give me the evidence that it was written about 83? I decline to answer a question which involves a date for which I have no evidence.

Then it comes to this: Mr. Bradlaugh asks me to produce an unbroken line, and when I produce it, he asks me to prove each link. Are you prepared to do that with regard to?—With regard to everything I advance.

The allusion by Clement in the year 83 to the 1st epistle of Corinthians is as follows: "Why, then, do we rend and tear in pieces the body of Christ, and raise seditions against our own body? Your schism has perverted many; it has discouraged many; it caused diffidence in many and grief in us all, and yet the sedition continues still. *Take the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle into your hands*; what did he first write to you in the beginning of the gospel? The truth he wrote to you by the Spirit, concerning himself and Cephas, and Apollos, because that even then ye had made divisions among yourselves." That is a correct description of the epistle as we have it.—And I deny that that is admitted by competent critics; I say part of the two epistles attributed to Clement only exist in one manuscript; that the second is abandoned by nearly all competent critics as a forgery, and that the existing evidence is the same for both.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

Do you mean by "the Scriptures," or by "these Scriptures," the authorised English version of the Bible, commencing with Genesis, and ending with Revelations?—Yea.

Do you agree that the attributes I stated in my speech for Deity are fair attributes?—Not as to one item, with the construction you put upon it.

Which is that?—All-goodness.

You think Deity is not all-good.—In the sense contended for by you, I think He is not.

Will you tell me the sense, if any, in which you would use the word "all-good"?—That His designs, judged by the long run of the thing, are "all-good," but that in the realisation of those all-good designs, there may be many measures of extremity and severity.

Do you mean for "goodness" as applied to God the same as "goodness" as applied to man?—If you will define goodness as applied to man, I will be in a position to answer.

I mean by goodness applied to man that that is good which tends to the greatest happiness of mankind, with the least injury to any of mankind.—I do not admit that definition as applicable to God.

What definition of the word "good" will you give me, then, that is applicable to God?—The development ultimately of the highest good, He only being the judge of what that is.

Do you know what is meant by good?—I have some slight conception; but I don't govern God by my slight conceptions.

Will you give me your slight conception of it?—That He will ultimately upon the earth develop complete well-being for every person that will finally be alive, on the basis of complete obedience to and honour of Him.

Do you think He could have done that before now?—Not upon the principle He has been pleased to adopt in the development of it, which is a principle requiring the free agency of man.

On any principle could God have done that which you define as "good" before now? Yes or no? on any principle?—It is not for me to say what God could do or could not do; I merely contend for what He has done.

Do you hold that He is all-powerful?—I do.

Do you hold that He is all-wise?—I do.

Do you hold that He knew how to do what was good?—I do.

Do you hold that He could have done what was good?—I won't answer that, because it implies a case that I don't recognise.

Will you kindly give me one of the points which you consider a surface contradiction in the Bible?—Well, Solomon in the Proverbs says: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him;" and adds immediately: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

Will you kindly give me the evidence to connect the person you call Solomon with the book you call Proverbs?—Yes; I produce Josephus.

Which of Josephus's works are you quoting—his "*Antiquities*" or his "*Wars*?"—Both.

Do you know that Josephus, in his references to Bible matters, states many facts which are not in our Bible at all?—In matters of detail, that is correct.

Do you consider Josephus trustworthy or not?—Where he is a personal witness I consider he is.

Do you think he was a personal witness to Solomon writing the Proverbs?—He was a personal witness to the evidence which proved Solomon to have been the writer.

Will you give me a statement of the evidence which Josephus personally witnessed?—He is a witness to the fact that the book constituting the Scriptures—

That is not the question.—You don't know till I have completed my answer.

My question is: what is the evidence of which Josephus was a personal witness in relation to Solomon and the Proverbs?—My answer is: the evidence of a nation's history, of which he was a personal witness, being himself an official person in that nation before its nationality was broken up.

Are you prepared with the evidence from Josephus which verifies that he is a personal witness of any such evidence?—If you deny it, I will perhaps prove it.

Will you undertake to produce that in your first speech to-morrow night?—It may interfere with my argument.

Will you to-morrow night—Yes or no?—Oh! I have my evidence here; I do not need to wait till to-morrow night.

Will you produce it now, then?—Yes.

Then I will ask you to refer to book and section. Mind, my question is not to show that the Jews accepted the Book of Proverbs, but the evidence which you say he was a personal witness of, to justify him in making that statement.—In *Josephus against Apion*, 1st bk., 8th section, he says:—"We have not an innumerable multitude of books amongst us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, as the Greeks have, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine, and of them, five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the tradition of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of 3,000 years; but as to the time from the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets who were after Moses wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life" (including, of course, Proverbs.) "It is true our history

hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation is evident by what we do, for *during so many ages that have already past, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, or take anything from them, or to make any change in them.*"

Will you kindly give me that for a moment? Now, will you find me a word there which says, first, that Solomon wrote Proverbs? and next, the evidence on which Josephus makes the statement?—Solomon's name is not there, the word Proverbs is not there, but the book is there.

Now, I ask you whether you did not tell me that you had the evidence there that Josephus said that Solomon wrote Proverbs, and that Josephus was a personal witness of the evidence?—I did not say so; I said Josephus was a witness of the evidence on which that fact stands.

Then I will ask you to find from Josephus the fact that Solomon wrote Proverbs?—I produce that evidence in what I have read.

It is not in what you have read?—I will show it you. I have admitted that the name of Solomon and Proverbs is not there.

Then do you mean when a man does not mention another man, it is evidence that he thinks he wrote something?—No, I do not. The Book of Proverbs is included there.

What I have denied and what you have said was there, are two things. First, you said that Josephus was witness that Solomon wrote Proverbs: that I did not care about; next, you said that Josephus was a witness on evidence of which he had personal witness. I ask you to prove both those statements, and you prove neither. Do you abandon them or confirm them?—No, indeed, I do not abandon them; I do not affirm what you have put in my mouth.

Do you think that, although neither Proverbs nor Solomon are named in the extract, there is positive evidence, in what you have read from *Apion*, of what you said?—Yes.

That is your sort of positive evidence. Well, will you kindly now give me another instance of a contradiction which you consider a contradiction on the surface?—I did not come prepared with a list of these.

Then may I ask you whether you know anything at all of Egyptian chronology?—I know a little about it, not so much as I know about the Bible.

Do you know that the contention of Bunsen, in his *Egypt's Place in the History of the World*, and of Lepsius, and of Champollion Figeac, is that the Hebrew chronology, as contained in the authorised version, does not allow sufficient time for the proved civilisation of Egypt?—I am aware that this is the contention of those writers.

Do you know that Professor Rawlinson, lecturer for the Christian Evidence Society, has admitted that the Hebrew chronology does not allow sufficient time for civilisation?—I am not aware of it, but I am disposed to accept it on your declaration.

Is it your opinion that the Hebrew chronology does or does not allow sufficient time?—I think it allows sufficient time in view of a circumstance which has not been taken sufficiently into account by those authorities you refer to, and that is, the far greater capacities of men in these ages, as evidenced by the erection of the Pyramids, and sundry other things, to turn to account the forces of nature, steam excepted. In view of that, I think there is ample time allowed in the Hebrew chronology for the civilisation of Egypt.

Do you know that Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson carries the era of Menes in Egypt to within twenty-eight years of the Deluge?—I do not know that as a fact, but if you declare it to be so, I accept it.

Do you know that he says that he hesitates to carry the date farther back for fear of interfering with the deluge of Noah?—As his opinion does not bear on the question, I do not concern myself with it one way or another.

But do you know that he says so?—I am not aware of the fact.

Do you deny that that is so?—I prefer dealing with the first records, the first evidences.

Tell me what book you should consider the best authority for me to take against you as an authority on Egyptian chronology?—I am not prepared to give you an opinion.

Do you know a book which is a good authority on Egyptian chronology?—Generally, I do

Which one?—Particularly, I do not.

Give me a general one?—I am simply aware of the existence of such books and of the general tenor of their arguments, but I am not familiar in that particular way which your question wishes to commit me to.

But name me some one of them whom you have read and think I may fairly take?—My attention has been devoted to the first authorities, and not to the secondary.

But give me a first authority.—I am prepared to debate the question on the first principles of the thing.

Give me what you consider a first authority upon Egyptian chronology.—Egyptian chronology is presented to my mind in a sufficiently satisfactory form in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The CHAIRMAN : Ladies and Gentlemen.—Mr. Roberts will now have a quarter of an hour in which to address you.

Mr. ROBERTS : Mr. Bradlaugh's opening remarks, in his speech in reply to mine, addressed themselves to a matter which afforded me a little surprise, though perhaps I need not have been surprised, and that is his challenging me to the production of the particular authorities upon which I rested those general statements concerning the evidence upon which the authenticity of the New Testament is based. I thought that those matters were so well known to, and accepted by, all educated men that it would only be a waste of time to resort to the technicalities into which he sought to draw me. But, nevertheless, I am not unprepared to give the references which he has demanded. I have given one reference, or was in the act of giving one reference, when my turn for questioning came to a close; and that is the 1st epistle of Clement, the 20th chapter, the 20th and 21st verses. He says he was unaware of any expression of Justin Martyr's which made mention of the Four Gospels. I will read him an extract from Justin Martyr's "*Apology of the Emperor*," in which he will find that the expression occurs which he denied. This is Justin Martyr's description of Christian worship in the second century, in his "*Apology*."

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Will you kindly quote book, section, and page?

Mr. ROBERTS : I am not prepared with a reference to the section, but I will get it if you desire it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : In this debate we shall never end if we don't, because, in the case of Justin Martyr, the only place in which the phrase translated "*Acts of the Apostles*" occurs, it is challenged as a forgery, and therefore it is necessary that any quotations should be specifically made.

Mr. ROBERTS : I will supply the references afterwards.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : I object to any quotations from Justin Martyr. We have six nights, and it can be supplied when my friend is ready.

The CHAIRMAN : I think it will be as well, and perfectly more in order, if Mr. Roberts is allowed to occupy his fifteen minutes, and then for Mr. Bradlaugh, have his fifteen minutes, just to say what he likes. I think it best for each to occupy their position—one the speaker, the other to sit and listen.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : On the question of order, Mr. Chairman, I ask leave to address you.

The CHAIRMAN : According to my judgment, it will be a deal better for Mr. Roberts to take his fifteen minutes.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : But you have not heard my point of order. On a question of order, I ask your leave to address you.

The CHAIRMAN : If I have my way, I think it advisable, without any question being put by Mr. Bradlaugh, that Mr. Roberts should occupy his fifteen minutes. I think it will be better; that is my judgment.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : You don't allow me, then, to state my point of order?

The CHAIRMAN: Not while Mr. Roberts is speaking.

Mr. ROBERTS: This is an extract from the writings of Justin Martyr, and if Mr. Bradlaugh denies the correctness of it, I will supply him with the exact reference, and if he finds out that the reference does not justify what I now allege, it will be a damaging thing to me for him to supply that to the meeting afterwards. In his first "Apology," addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and written in the second century, he describes the worship of the Christians, and after having mentioned what he says, was "written by the apostles in the *memorials which they have made, which are called GOSPELS*," he says: "On the day called Sunday, there is an assembly in one place of all who dwell in the cities or in the countries, and memorials of the apostles or the writings of the prophets, are read as time may permit. Afterwards, when he who reads has ended, he who presides admonishes and exhorts by word to imitate these good things." I will not read the whole of the extract, because it proceeds to deal with matters that have no immediate and direct reference to the particular point for which I cite the quotation—the object of the citation of the quotation being to show that there was an allusion by Justin Martyr to the fact that at the meetings of Christians in the second century, there were books that were read that passed current under the general designation of *Memorials of the Apostles*—that is to say, the writings of histories; and here we have such writings which have been received from that day down to ours; and if these be not those writings, is Mr. Bradlaugh prepared to show what they are to which Justin Martyr here makes reference?

But I will now finish the part of the argument which I was obliged to break off in my opening address, and that was an undertaking, on my part, to prove also the authenticity of the books that constitute the Old Testament. The nature of the evidence upon that point is this. Some may say: "What evidence have we that there existed before the days of Christ a compilation of works such as that which now constitutes that part of the Bible called the Old Testament?" That evidence I produce first from the New Testament; and the evidence here is exceedingly extensive, far more extensive than I shall be justified, in the limited time at my disposal, in placing before you; but I will refer to such general features as this: we have it recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, the 17th chapter, that "Paul, as his manner was, went into the synagogue, and reasoned with them out of the *Scriptures*," the writings. If we ask what writings, we find the question answered in the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the 23rd verse: "When they (the Jews) had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the *Prophets*, from morning till evening." Therefore, in Paul's day the law of Moses was known as a standard of reference accepted among the Jews, and also the writings of the prophets. Then I will bring the testimony of Christ, concerning whom I hope to have much to say upon another evening, and whose case is far removed from the mythical region to which Mr. Bradlaugh's contention compels him to relegate him. Indeed, it is the fact that the more educated class of unbelievers have now one and all abandoned the theory of a mythical invention, and admit that Jesus Christ was a historic personage, who actually appeared among the Jews, and the record of whose life as recorded by the apostles, is in the main historic. I say, when we come to consider Christ, we see in his life evidence of the prior existence of a compilation of writings accepted amongst the Jews as a standard of reference and knowledge in divine things; for consider that touching incident connected with the events that happened on the third day after his crucifixion, when the women went to the tomb and found it empty, and when that same day, two of his disciples were going on a distant errand, and were sad concerning the circumstances that had just transpired, and were ignorant of the fact that he had arisen; and Christ drew near to them and said, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad?" And they said, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" And he said unto them, "What things?" And they said him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet mighty in deed and word God and all the people"—in the 24th chapter of Luke you will find it, Mr. Bra

—and they expressed their great bewilderment with regard to the fact of his crucifixion, and Christ said: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at *Moses and all the prophets*, he expounded unto them in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself."

I have given a specimen of the kind of evidence that proves that the New Testament was in circulation throughout the Christian community towards the close of the first century, and I shall have more to say about that to-morrow night in a different connection. But observe that, if that argument be established, then the authenticity, or at all events the prior existence of *Moses* and the prophets as a national accepted standard of reference is also proved, and is proved in even a more conclusive manner than that, though not more conclusive in a logical sense, perhaps, but more conclusive as regards the common conceptions of people. I refer to what I have read, for instance, from the writings of Josephus, whose writings cannot be impugned, whose book was written, before the first century was over, by an eye-witness of the destruction of Jerusalem; and he in the words I have read this evening, in answer to a question by Mr. Bradlaugh, gives you the testimony of an official Jew of these writings having been in circulation among the Jews for ages, and accepted by them all; and Josephus's declaration on that point is collaterally confirmed by a circumstance of the most specific and decisive character. What is that? Ptolemy Philadelphus, a literary King of Egypt—one of the distinguishing features of whose reign was that he made a collection of all the books that he could collect in the wide-world—finally decided to obtain a copy of a book he was told was in circulation among the Jews; and he communicated with the high priest of Jerusalem—at that time, I think, Jonathan, the brother of Judas Maccabæus—and requested him to send these books in the proper custody, that they might be translated into the Greek language, so as to be open to the reference of the world in general in the library that he established; and they did it, and we have that translation of theirs existing and current in the present day, and accepted and recognised by all educated men. I refer to the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures effected about 300 years before Christ; and, therefore, in that, we have a demonstration of the sort which I undertook to produce, namely that not only were the writings of the New Testament current among all the Christian community throughout the world—for, mind you, it is not one part of the world; there is Clement of Alexandria, Irenæus in France, Clement at Rome, three widely separated parts of the world in these comparatively barbarous ages. At all these places the same New Testament Scriptures were in circulation, and were quoted as commonly by the writers in those days, as the New Testament is quoted by ministers in the present day. I say that, having proved the circulation of the New Testament at that early period, I have upon the foundation of that proof also proved that the books of the Old Testament existed for at least three centuries previously, indeed more than that; for what was it that incited Ptolemy Philadelphus to obtain that translation? Was it not the wide-spread knowledge that there was, and had been for ages, in the hands of the Jews this volume? Therefore the resolution of Ptolemy Philadelphus to obtain that translation is of itself evidence of the previous existence of those documents for a good while before at least; and we can carry the argument much further back than that by a process which will, perhaps, be better exemplified on some of the other evenings, when we come to substantiate some of the other propositions. The Chairman calling my attention to the time, has broken the line of my argument, and therefore I will leave Mr. Bradlaugh to take his turn.

MR. BRADLAUGH: First, the evidence as to the Septuagint is exactly the opposite of the statement Mr. Roberts has made, and it shows, therefore, the misfortune in conducting this debate without giving authorities as we go on. Mr. Roberts—and I am quite sure that he means to tell you, at least I think so, what he believes to be true—Mr. Roberts must be utterly unacquainted with all the criticism on the subject, or he would know, when he says that it is accepted and recognised by all educated men, that one of the very latest amongst orthodox writers, the Rev. Dr. Irons, one of the officials of St. Paul's at the present moment, in his book, entitled *The Bible and its Interpreters*, says no man knows when the Septuagint was translated, who translated it, where the

version was made, or how it was made; and I will undertake to prove to you that the balance of criticism is utterly against your view; so that it shows that, in these kind of statements, you want to know the evidence on which your antagonists rely. I do not want to be in the painful position of telling Mr. Roberts each time, Your statement is not true. I want him to give me the evidence on which he relies, and then I will show him where the supposed evidence is no evidence at all; but if he simply makes general statements, and tells you that it is accepted and recognised by all educated men, when a statement of that kind simply means that he has not read what educated men have written about it; and when he tells you that it is the Greek translation of our Hebrew text, that is very funny, because in the mere matter of chronology alone, one version differs about 900 years; and in another version the difference is over 1,200 years from the Hebrew, and, therefore, cannot possibly be a translation of it. Mr. Roberts has got to prove his case, and I must ask him to state his evidence on which he relies for the Septuagint translation, and then I will reply to it. Evidently, Mr. Roberts and I differ as to what is evidence. He said he was going to prove from Justin Martyr the existence of the Four Gospels, and he read to you something about Memorials of the Apostles, but what on earth there is to identify those with the Four Gospels, in the books, as we have got them, I do not know, and it requires a mind like Mr. Roberts's to get the evidence out of it. That passage says nothing of any gospels, and would be as good evidence for forty gospels as for four; and I will show you that in the time of Justin Martyr, forty gospels and writings of apostles existed, at least; and I will tell Mr. Roberts where he can get a list of them—in the Rev. Jeremiah Jones's *Canon of the New Testament*. Jeremiah Jones has made an index of what he calls the Apocryphal Books and Gospels. Then he says that he read from Josephus's testimony. Well now, there again we differ as to the meaning of words. He was to prove from Josephus that Solomon wrote the Proverbs, and that Josephus had knowledge of the evidence which entitled him to say that Solomon wrote the Proverbs; and when he read it, there was not a word about Solomon, not a single word about the Proverbs. Well, if that is evidence, the sooner we leave off this debate the better. Then again, he quoted Clement of Rome, and he did not quote; and here is another difficulty: if my friend brought here the works themselves to quote from, I should be able to say, if he told me which edition it was, "turn to the preface, and you will find my arguments against it there, in the handwritings of your own men;" but when he simply quotes loose statements from other writers, there is no sort of reply to that kind possible. And when he says, "Oh! if Mr. Bradlaugh disputes, I will prove," that is not the question: his business is to prove as he goes on, and not to make loose statements, which require proof at some later time. Now, he says something about the women who went to the tomb, and he gave me chapter and verse, as he saw I was looking at the Bible; but he did not know what I was referring to. I want to know whether God revealed that, according to Matt. xxviii., two women went; or, according to John xx. 1, that one woman went; or, according to Luke xxiv., that several women went; and I want to know whether Mary went by herself, or whether several went with her; and I want to know whether that is one of the surface contradictions which Mr. Roberts had forgotten, and which he said he would look up for me. Then Mr. Roberts is good enough to say that he will refer you to Acts xxviii. 23. But what does that prove? Simply that there were current in the alleged time of Jesus, works which were called the law of Moses and the prophets. I have never denied that. But you have got first to identify those with the Bible as we have them, and then to prove that this is divine revelation. A loose statement of that kind is no sort of evidence at all. It is only evidence of the existence of something called the "law of Moses;" and I will defy Mr. Roberts to identify the Pentateuch with those words, because I will show you from the Bible itself plenty of places in which the word "law" is used, which cannot possibly mean the whole of the contents of the Pentateuch. And do not forget that Mr. Roberts has not said one word about the texts to which I called his attention: these texts affecting the goodness, omnipotence and immutability of Deity. Those are passed over; and then he tells you that all educated men have abandoned the mythical theory regarding the Christ. Well, now, that is really a little too strong. I do not know that it would amount to anything if it were proved; but it is not even, in the

remotest degree proved. What most men are prepared to concede is what I conceded in the answer to Mr. Roberts. The name which is rendered "Jesus," is only a form of the Hebrew word "Joshua." It is quite possible there was a real man on whom the myth has been centred; but there is not an educated man who admits a real Jesus, who was born without a father; whose husband's mother had two fathers; who lived at the same time in Judea and Egypt; who was known by John, and not known by him at the same moment of time; who was crucified, and in the grave three days and three nights, between late on Friday evening and the period which elapsed before Saturday night was quite over. Now, if Mr. Roberts should tell me those statements are not in the Bible, he will have an opportunity of asking me for texts, and he will find that I can quote him chapter and verse for every one of them. Now, I will ask him to take another illustration: whether Genesis xviii. 20, 21, where God is represented as saying that the story has reached Him about Sodom and Gomorrah, and that He is going to inquire, and will know—whether that is consistent with the omniscience of Deity, and whether what follows is consistent with the goodness of the Deity? And don't forget here that I hold exactly the doctrine put forward by John Stuart Mill: I hold that you have not the right to apply the word "goodness" in one sense in reference to man, and in some other sense in reference to God, and then tell me you cannot explain what that second sense is. I hold it is an entire abandonment of the whole of the debate to make any such contention as that. If Mr. Roberts does not know what goodness means, he ought not to be here; if he does, he ought to tell us. He ought not to tell us that goodness for God may not mean the same thing now as it may a thousand years hence, or as it did a thousand years since. A book which represents as an all-good God, guilty of evil acts, cannot be a Divine revelation. Then I will ask him as to Deut. viii. 2, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, whether these are consistent with God's omniscience? I will ask him whether the whole story of the Fall, omitting its absurdities, is not one of the most monstrous stories as a picture of the character of the Deity? whether it does not picture God making the Garden of Eden a damnation-trap in which to catch the whole of the human race, so that he may punish them; I will ask him whether the whole story of the Deluge, admitting its monstrous improbabilities and impossibilities, does not picture God as a cruel Deity, who would delight rather in punishing than reforming, and who slaughtered all living beings, the innocent with the guilty; I will ask him whether the case of Jacob and Esau, referred to in Mal. i. 2, does not show that God either loved the man because he was a rascal, or in spite of it; because he was a liar, or in spite of it; because he helped to rob his uncle; or in spite of it; because he cheated his brother, or in spite of it; and whether it does not show that He hated Esau, because he had the misfortune to be cheated, and the virtue to be forgiving, or in spite of it. I submit that on either contention it is utterly inexplicable with the contention that the Bible is the revelation of God. And then I will take him to 1st Kings xi. 33, 34, 38; xiv. 8, where it says David never did anything but good; did only that which was right in the sight of God; I will ask him whether David was not a thief, a liar, a murderer, a perjurer, an adulterer, a traitor, a scoundrel, all through, who did not even repent when he died? how could such a man have obeyed all God's statutes and commandments? And I will point out to him that, very curiously, he is wasting all his learned evidence on people who are certainly very remote from the time of Moses, and he does it in the funniest way, for he quotes you Clement of Alexandria, Irenæus, Clement of Rome; and he talks of "those days," as if they all lived at that time. Would you talk of a man who lived in 1745, and another who lived in 1845, as living in "those days?" Now, I ask my friend not to assume that I am ignorant of all these things. I do not assume to be a learned man, but there is not an author he can quote in relation to this subject that I will not, when he has quoted him, tell him what can be said for or against him.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Roberts will now occupy six minutes out of the twelve remaining, and then Mr. Bradlaugh will reply till ten o'clock.

Mr. ROBERTS: Ladies and gentlemen; if Mr. Bradlaugh would strictly confine himself to accuracy in his representations of what I say, my arguments would not suffer in his hands. I have not represented that those authorities I have quoted were

contemporary. I have given, in each case, the year in which they wrote.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : No.

Mr. ROBERTS : I have. I stated that Clement wrote A.D. 83, and that Tertullian wrote in the middle of the second century. I gave those general indications, and certainly never committed myself to the absurdity of supposing that men living in the first century and the second could, by any construction, be said to be contemporary. He has given me a great many passages to explain. I wish he would give me them as questions. I will undertake to answer every one of them if they are put to me in the colloquial style of the Socratic method ; but how can I, in six minutes, explain twenty or thirty alleged discrepancies, which discrepancies I am persuaded, do not exist. I have read through a list of 144 so-called contradictions, issued by a Secular Society in America ; and with the exception of some five or six, there is not even the shadow of a difficulty to contend with, and every one of them in the process of question and answer, I would undertake to explain, and I would do so in a speech, were the speech of sufficient dimensions to admit of it. With regard to the Septuagint, I did not speak at random in saying what I said ; I gave the evidence on which my statement rests. There is the Septuagint ; there is such a book ; it is substantially a transcript of the Hebrew Scriptures, though I grant there are discrepancies of the sort he mentioned ; that is to say, the chronology does not agree ; there has been tampering somewhere, undoubtedly, but there is the fact ; here is a literary monument, which, apart from all discrepancies, certainly proves what I quoted it to prove : and that is, that the Hebrew Scriptures existed as a literary compilation, at least in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and I do not produce it to prove anything more than that. The simplest mind is capable of receiving that argument ; for where does the Septuagint come from, if there were not Hebrew Scriptures from which to make a translation ? What is the account of it ? Josephus here gives us an account of it. We have both the book, and an account of how the book came into existence. The only thing Mr. Bradlaugh can do is to say, "How do I know that Josephus is speaking the truth ?" He tells us he believes in Eusebius because there is an unbroken line of reference ; and then, as I proceed to unfold my references in regard to Paul, he says, "How do I know that he wrote that letter you are referring to ?" On the principle that Mr. Bradlaugh is contending for to-night, I deny that he can possibly prove that there ever existed such a person as Eusebius, or that he ever wrote the books that bear his name ; indeed, he cannot prove the existence of Shakspeare on the same principle, for he never saw him, and he has no certain evidence that he wrote the book—that is to say upon his principle. I admit that there is evidence in regard to Shakspeare, and in regard to Eusebius, and in regard to Paul ; and there would never have been any objection to the evidence in regard to Paul if his case had not involved evidence of Christ's resurrection. I produce, then, this statement of Josephus in reference to the Septuagint.—(*Josephus's Antiquities* ; book xii., sections 1 and 4.) Those two sections contain a sufficiency of evidence on the point. I will read one or two extracts, though I am afraid the time will scarcely admit of it to-night. Of course, I am well aware that critics have written against it ; but, nevertheless, my remark, in its general form, is unimpeachable, and that is, that critical, judicial, clear, unbiassed minds there are that receive the Septuagint as the translation made in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Your statement was that the Septuagint was accepted and recognised by all educated men ; you made no exception whatever. You have curiously forgotten that I said that you classed together Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenæus, as "of those days ;" and you said you gave the date of Tertullian. I did not say a word about Tertullian, and I say that you did not give the dates of the others ; and it would be a great deal better if you would attend to exactly what I say, and not answer what I do not say. It is perfectly true that in six minutes you could not answer all the contradictions, but you might have answered one. Instead of that you have referred to an American society that has issued 144 contradictions ; and you have said that I cannot prove the existence of Shakspeare. Supposing I cannot, that would not show that the Bible is a divine revelation. On matters of ordinary occurrence, I accept the best experience of the best men as I find it fairly recorded, and upon that canon of evidence I can prove all reasonable historic events. It is only when you give me an extraordinary occurrence—of men

who have no fathers ; who are in the grave when they are out of it ; and who are seen by one woman, who is two women, who are more than three women ; it is then that the experience does not apply ; and, surely, in six minutes you might have taken one illustration. If you would devote yourself to doing that, then we should have this matter cleared up very much. Now, I submit that, though we have got nearly to the end of our first night's debate, there has not been an attempt to state the attributes of Deity on the other side. There is an admission now that there is the variation I said in the chronology between the Septuagint and the Hebrew, which in one case is 900 years, and in the other, 1,200 years ; and those are called trifling differences ; but are we to be damned or saved by them ? And you say there have been tamperings. Is it by God's consent or against it ? And then you say, Oh ! you quote the Septuagint to prove that the Hebrew books existed in the time of Ptolemy ; but you have got to prove that your Septuagint translation was made in the time of Ptolemy. A statement of Josephus will not prove it, because you have got to go back to something behind it ; and I will, to-morrow, give you the whole of the evidence for and against the Septuagint. I will quote every author about it. You ought to do it ; but if you will not, I must do the work that you ought to do, unless you abandon the evidence. Now, I ask, that through this debate, when an author is quoted, that we shall have the author and his express words, and the date when he is supposed to have written, and not general statements that all educated men have accepted it. I submit that, up to the present moment, not one atom of evidence has been advanced in support of the proposition that Mr. Roberts has undertaken to prove.

Second Night,

WEDNESDAY, 14th JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, LEICESTER.

THE CHAIR WAS OCCUPIED BY MR. W. STANYON OF LEICESTER.

The CHAIRMAN having asked the meeting to refrain from the expression of their feelings, called upon Mr. Roberts to resume the debate.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, in commencing my remarks this evening, I will comply with the request made by Mr. Bradlaugh last night, and define what I mean by the proposition that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation. By the Scriptures, I mean that compilation of writings that passes current in English society under the name of the Bible. By the proposition that these writings are authentic, I mean that they were really written by the persons by whom they profess to have been written, and at the time at which they profess to have been written; and, that, therefore, they are authentic; and, that, besides being authentic, they are reliable; that is, we can put our trust in them as an accurate record of the various matters which they profess to set forth. Those matters are, in my contention, the records of divine revelation, or rather the record involves the setting forth of divine revelation. By that I mean a communication of knowledge concerning God, which we could not otherwise have attained; and by God I mean the primal energy, force, wisdom, power, strength, or whatever other term you choose to employ to define the first creative energy from which things have had their development or their outcome, thinking it necessary only to add that in my belief, the view of that power presented in the Scriptures is the right one, viz., that in its totality, so to speak, that power is a person, having in their highest degree, all the attributes which go to constitute personality, consciousness, perception, volition, &c. Beyond this, I will not occupy time in presenting any abstract view of God, for we might occupy the whole six nights in discussing the thing in a metaphysical way without arriving at anything like a tangible result. In this connection I will remind Mr. Bradlaugh and his friends, that even upon their hypothesis, there is inscrutable mystery at the basis of things as they are. I can call no better witness to that fact than Professor Tyndall, a man great in the particular school to which these friends belong. He—in an inaugural address at the meeting of the British Association, at Manchester—says: "Science does not in any degree lessen the wonder with which we look at the material universe. At best it only marshals the phenomena of nature under the head of all its sequences, which are called law; but the great ocean of the unknown simply recedes as we advance, and all the researches that science may make to the end of time will never abridge by one hairsbreadth the infinite expanse of mystery across that boundless ocean. The curiosity of the intellect will always sail towards an ever-vanishing horizon. The region of mystery lies not merely in the distance, but also at our very feet." He says when he has looked at the spring-tide, at the sprouting leaves, and grass, and flowers; when he has seen the general joy of opening life, he has asked himself, "Can it be that there is no being or thing in nature that knows more about these matters than I do? Can it be that I, in my ignorance, represent the highest knowledge existing of these things in the universe?" And his answer is: "The man who puts that question to himself, if he be not a shallow man; if he be capable of being penetrated by a profound thought, will never answer it by professing that creed of Atheism which has been so lightly attributed to me."

Therefore, I think that, in view of the fact that even upon the hypothesis of an insentient nature, so to speak, being the author of what we see, we land ourselves at last against a dead wall of mystery, it would be bootless for me to attempt to define, in a philosophical sense, what I mean by the word *God*, or the phrase *primal energy*. Suffice it to say that there is a primal energy in that particular phase in which He or it—if Mr. Bradlaugh prefers that pronoun—is presented in these records which constitute the ancient archives of the Jews. The truth, then, of the proposition I seek to maintain, not by hair-splitting, or far-fetched or misty arguments, but by submitting a plain, broad, common sense argument in matters of world-wide notoriety, which the meanest intellect can apprehend when brought to bear.

My contention last night was that, taking the Bible in our hands with the idea of believing it, we should be compelled, on the hypothesis of its being true, to expect to find existing at the present day the nation of the Jews and a corrupt political Christianity; and I pointed to the fact that these are in existence. Further, I produced evidence of the other fact, which ought to be capable of some degree of demonstration, that these writings existed at the time, and were in current circulation amongst the believers of it at the time they were produced. To-night I will take one step further, a more important step, and introduce a more interesting topic, perhaps—though the topic of last night was not uninteresting, and certainly not unimportant, for it constituted a necessary preliminary and a foundation for what is to follow. But the matter I am to speak of to-night appeals more directly to the common cognitions of men. I refer to the uprise in the world of the system bearing the name of Christianity. That system must have a history. Christianity did not spring up out of the ground; it did not come mysteriously out of the atmosphere; it is traceable back to certain circumstances that planted it in the world; and it is to those circumstances that I now call your attention, as furnishing the most palpable evidence of the truth of the proposition for which I am contending. And, first, let me say, there are not only Christians to-day, but there were Christians in the first century, and widely multiplied. It is necessary for me to prove that, as a step in the argument, by way of making it invincible; and I prove it by two citations, which, I think Mr. Bradlaugh will not call in question, and to which, probably, he has the scholastic access, without calling on me to produce a technical reference, though I will do that if he asks it. I refer to the testimony of Tacitus, the Roman historian, who lived at the close of the first century, and I refer to the letter written by Pliny the Younger to the Emperor Trajan in the year 112, asking the Emperor's advice as to how he was to deal with this rising sect of Christians, if they were to be murdered wholesale, as had been the custom. I will quote his very words, merely to show that there was a great multitude of believers in Christ in that age, as a preliminary to enquiring how came that multitude to be brought into the conviction they were entertaining—convictions which brought them nothing but evil as regards this world—for which they suffered death by martyrdom. I find Pliny's letter at the close of the works of Josephus, although, I believe, it is also extant in the writings of Jerome, and also in a book bearing Pliny's name, *The Epistles of Pliny*. This is the letter: "Sir.—It is my constant method to apply myself to you for the resolution of all my doubts." Now, please, transport yourselves back in imagination to A.D. 112; let the mind act telescopically to-night; let us remember that there have been centuries before our time; let us try to detach our consciousness from the immediate connection of present circumstances, and realise the facts that have gone before. Pliny the Younger, writing to the Emperor Trajan at Rome, says: "I have never been present at the execution of the Christians (by others), on which account I am unacquainted with what used to be inquired into, and what and how far they are to be punished. Nor are my doubts small whether there be not a distinction to be made between the ages (of the accused), and whether tender youth ought to have the same punishment with strong men; whether there be not room for pardon upon repentance, and whether it may not be an advantage to one that had been a Christian that he has forsaken Christianity; whether the bare name, without any crimes besides, or the crime of adhering to the name is to be punished? In the meantime, I have taken this course about those who have been brought before me as Christians. I asked them whether they were Christians or not. If they confessed that they were Christians, I asked them again

and a third time, intervening threatenings with the questions. If they persevered in their confessions, I ordered them to be executed; for I did not doubt, but let their confessions be of any sort whatsoever, this positiveness and inflexible obstinacy deserve to be punished. There have been some of this mad sect whom I took notice of in particular as Roman citizens, that they might be sent to the city. After some time, as is usual in such circumstances, the crime spread itself; and many more cases came before me. . . . Hereupon, I have put off any further examinations, and have recourse to you, for the affair seems to be well worth consultation, *especially on account of the number of those that are in danger*; for there are many of every age, of every rank, and of both sexes, who are now and hereafter likely to be called to account and to be in danger; for this superstition *is spread like a contagion, not only into cities and towns, but into country villages also*, which yet there is reason to hope may be stopped and corrected. To be sure, temples *which were almost forsaken*, begin already to be frequented, and the holy solemnities, *which were long intermitted*, begin to be revived. The sacrifices begin to sell well everywhere, of which very few purchasers had of late appeared. Whereby it is easy to suppose how *great a multitude* of men may be amended if place for repentance be admitted."

Now, observe this testimony in A.D. 112, points back a long way into the first century, in saying that for a long time the worship of the idols *had been given up* on account of what he calls "this Christian superstition." The testimony of Tacitus, for the knowledge of which the world, for a long time, was solely indebted to the extracts given by Josephus in his *Antiquities*, is as follows: "Nero," says Tacitus, "in order to stifle the rumour (that he had himself set Rome on fire) ascribed it to those people who were hated for their wicked practices, and called by the vulgar Christian. These he, Nero, punished exquisitely. The author of the same was Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was brought to punishment by Pontius Pilate, the Procurator not only over Judea, whence this mischief first sprang, but in the City of Rome also." That is sufficient for my present purpose: and by that testimony I have proved the existence, in the first century, of a vast multitude throughout the Roman Empire believing in Christ, and suffering all manner of disadvantages and evils in consequence of that belief; and I have to ask, What was the sacrifice for? I mean what did they sacrifice all these advantages for? Was it for the sake of a religious opinion? Was it for a mere belief in what somebody else had said? If it was, I grant that the argument would only go to show their sincerity; it would not necessarily show that the opinion which they sincerely entertained was a correct one. But I am now to call your attention to the fact that it was not a matter of opinion for which they suffered, but a matter of fact, of which the leading members of their body were personal witnesses. To that fact I wish now to call your attention, and I also particularly invite your consideration to the question of whether there was a possibility of any mistake about the matter. Pliny could not tell the cause of the multiplication of this people; Tacitus could not give the Emperor to understand what was the secret of the obstinacy of this "vulgar Christian sect" in the maintenance of their convictions unto death. We must, therefore, go to the writings which I showed last night, and which I am prepared to show much more extensively than I did then, were in extensive circulation amongst this multitude of persecuted people; we must go to those writings to find out the secret of that confidence.

Now I first call as evidence a Roman Governor—not one of themselves—Festus, I think, who had arraigned before him Paul, the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and the most effective instrument in the diffusion of the faith of Christ. He heard him himself, and afterwards held a joint hearing with Agrippa. Festus thus states the cause to the King: "There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix, about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him, to whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. Therefore, when they were come thither, without any delay on the morrow, I sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth; against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed, but had certain questions against him of

their own superstition, and of *one Jesus, who was dead*, WHOM PAUL AFFIRMED TO BE ALIVE." That is Festus's definition of the question that was at issue between Paul and his accusers; was it a correct definition by Festus? In answer to that, I invite your attention to a number of statements by the apostles themselves, which go to show that that was the matter involved in their public testimony. In the first chapter of Acts, at a meeting of the apostles after the ascension of Christ, and before the Day of Pentecost, when the question of the vacancy created by the apostasy of Judas came to be considered, this counsel was given one to another: "Wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be *a witness with us of HIS RESURRECTION*." In the second chapter of the Acts, at the 32nd verse, Peter, in making a speech to a great congregation of Jews, who had been brought together by the great marvel which we shall have to consider at a later stage of the evening, viz., a number of men speaking languages they had never learnt, says: "*This Jesus hath God raised up*, WHEREOF WE ALL ARE WITNESSES." *Witnesses!* In Acts iii. 14, we have a speech delivered before the Jewish authorities, who tried to suppress this testimony: "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, *whom God hath raised from the dead*; WHEREOF WE ARE WITNESSES." "Whereof we are witnesses." Acts iv. 10: "Be it known unto you all"—this is another speech on another occasion—"and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, *whom God raised from the dead*, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts v. 29: "Peter and the other apostles answered and said"—again addressing themselves to the magistrates on the bench, who were telling them on no account to persist in this preaching of theirs, as they were filling Jerusalem with sedition, and that it would be at the peril of their liberty and life if they did; their answer is, "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers *raised up Jesus*, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins unto Israel. And WE ARE HIS WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS, and so is also the Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that obey Him,"—the full pith of which latter statement we shall have to consider upon a subsequent occasion.

There are other statements of the same sort, but these are sufficient for the present purpose, and, therefore, I will leave it there, and ask, Was their witness true? What did they allege as the basis of their convictions upon the point? Acts iv. 19: "Peter and John answered and said unto them"—on another occasion before magistrates again—"Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For *we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*." Acts i. 3: "To whom"—that is to the disciples—"he (Christ) showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, *being seen of them forty days*"—nearly six weeks—"speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." In Acts x. 39, in the house of Cornelius, Peter declares: "*WE ARE WITNESSES OF ALL THINGS WHICH HE DID both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day*, and showed him openly; not unto all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us *who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead*." Therefore, observe, they were not put to death for entertaining a certain religious opinion; they were not put to death because they believed on the testimony of somebody else that Christ rose. Their testimony was: "We who were with him during his life in the flesh—we who saw him crucified, have seen him alive and have spent six weeks in his company, and he parted with us upon a certain occasion, with a promise to return." And now comes the question, What led them to make that statement? Did they get anything by it? Why! they just got all the things that all men everywhere, in every country and in every age, seek to avoid; they got poverty, they got insult, they got imprisonment, they got death. Everyone of the apostles lost their lives for it; perhaps I ought to qualify that statement; some of them, I believe, according to

ecclesiastical tradition, came to a peaceful end ; but, nevertheless, a great proportion of them suffered death for their testimony. Therefore, their sincerity cannot be impugned ; for there is never a lie told by an impostor but what it is to get some good to himself by it ; and as soon as the good does not come, and as soon as the bad begins to come, you will see him flinch and turn round.

This is no case of imposture ; therefore, the question is, were they mistaken ? In considering that, let us regard the circumstances : whether those circumstances were of such a character as to admit the possibility of mistake. In the first place, they did not expect Christ to die ; in Luke xviii. 31, we read : " Christ took unto him the Twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on ; and they shall scourge him and put him to death ; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things : and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." In the 24th chapter of Luke you have the case to which I called attention last night ; verse 44 is a further amplification of it. He said to them—this is after his resurrection—" These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Mr. Chairman.—It is very evident that either my memory has utterly deceived me, or that Mr. Roberts's memory has utterly deceived him. He said he had given you evidence, last night, that the writings were in current circulation at the time they were produced. Now I never heard him say when any one of the books was produced ; I never heard him fix a date or an author in the New Testament, except the Corinthians, which he attributed to Paul ; I never heard him fix a date or an author in the Old, except for the Book of Proverbs, on which he turned out to be utterly incorrect, attributing it to Solomon on the authority of Josephus, and then not fixing any date at all for its currency ; I never heard him pretend to give you any kind of clue as to whom he supposed to be the several authors, or when he supposed anyone of the particular books to be issued ; and I cannot help thinking that his memory must have entirely misled him, and that he never did, during his speech last night supply us with any one of those facts ; and I will ask him not to imagine that something relating to the existence of Christians, which I do not dispute, is evidence of the authenticity and truth of every book in the Bible. I do not dispute the existence of the Mahomedans, but I should be very sorry to accept that as a proof of the authenticity and divinity of the Koran ; I do not dispute the existence of the Buddhists, but I should be very sorry to accept the fact of their existence as clear and irrevocable evidence of the truth of any books they may put forward as sacred. And I must ask Mr. Roberts to begin by specifying with the first book of the Bible—the Book of Genesis—who it is that he says professes to be the author of it, when it is that he says it was issued, amongst whom he says it was issued, and to give some evidence from contemporary writers of its having been in current circulation at the time of its being issued. I say there is not a particle of such evidence to be found. But when he has done this with the Book of Genesis, I will take him through every other book in the Bible in the same way. And now I will ask him to be kind enough to just look at what he imagines to be evidence. He says, " I will quote to you a Roman Governor, Festus," and he coolly quotes the book of Acts to me. But he has got to prove the book of Acts before he is entitled to quote it here. If you are to demonstrate that that Bible is reliable from beginning to end simply because it says something there, well, then there is entirely an end to all discussion. Let him find this account of Agrippa and Festus in Roman history, with any record of these books, then I will grant there may be something in it ; but the question we have got to discuss is not, " Did some man named Paul live ? " the question we have got to discuss is not, " Did some man named Jesus live ? " because both those facts might be true, and yet this book not be the authentic record of divino

revelation. We must just please put the dots on the *i*, so that we may know what we are talking about. Well, Mr. Roberts stated that between the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven, Christ was on the earth six weeks, and he was good enough to refer me—not for that, but for another point—to the 24th chapter of Luke. I will ask him whether he can make anything like six weeks, or even one week, out of the period which is put in that chapter for the ascension of Jesus to heaven. I will grant that Mr. Roberts may be right, and that Christ may have been six weeks on earth; then I will ask him, if Luke says that was not so, on his own statement Luke must be stating something not true, and the book of Luke cannot be a divine revelation. If Acts is right, Luke is wrong; if Luke is right, Acts is wrong; and, in any case, Mr. Roberts is wrong, because he has got to make both books right. Now, we will pass by the whole of the quotation from Professor Tyndall. I have a great respect for him; but Professor Tyndall's opinions on Atheism, or natural processes, have not the smallest relation to the question we have to discuss. I will pass by every reference, at present, to Tacitus or Pliny, because it does not corroborate a single portion of the statement Mr. Roberts has to make out, which is, "That the Scriptures are the Authentic and Reliable Records of Divine Revelation." There is nothing to prove that proposition in Tacitus, and there is nothing in Pliny. If there were ten times there what Mr. Roberts imagines exists there, it would not go one step to prove his position. Now, I will ask him to follow me a little in what I shall submit. I gave Mr. Roberts a large number of texts last night. He said six minutes was not sufficient to answer them; but he has had thirty minutes to-night, and he might have answered some of them. If he could not have dealt with the whole, he might, at least, have commenced. Quoting Pliny will not prove that the story of the Fall in Genesis is one consistent with God's loving-kindness and mercy; quoting Festus, or Pliny, or Tacitus, or anybody else, will not get rid of any of the texts as to God being angry when He should not have been angry, and repenting when He should not have repented, and changing when He should not have changed. All those texts I read to Mr. Roberts last night remain untouched. I suppose it will be fair to say that they have slipped his memory since, because he thought them of importance at the time. The reason he gave for not answering them was that six minutes was not long enough, and it was a very proper reason; but he has had thirty minutes to-night, and he has quoted Professor Tyndall instead of explaining the Bible. Now, if you please, I will press Mr. Roberts a little further upon the position he has now taken. He says that by "authentic" he means that the books were really written by the persons by whom they are professed to be written, and at the times they are professed to have been written. Now, so far as I am aware, the only sort of profession of authorship for any of the early books in the Bible is the heading in the English Bible to the first five books—the First Book of Moses, the Second Book of Moses, the Third Book of Moses, the Fourth Book of Moses, and the Fifth Book of Moses. I am not aware that Moses—supposing him to have lived—ever made any profession on the subject at all; but I will assume that Mr. Roberts means that *authentic* means that these five books were written by Moses. Well, then, I will trouble him to give me some proof of that; I will trouble him to give me some proof of the time that Moses wrote them; I will trouble him to give me some proof from some other author of the existence of the books about that time, because he says they were in current circulation. Then I will ask him who it is who professes to have written the Book of Judges, because I do not see any profession of authorship; I should like him to tell me the date at which he thinks that book was issued, and to show me some evidence of its being in current circulation at the time he says it was issued, and then from that I will lead him through every one of the books of the Bible, and ask him whether, instead of all that being true, there is not very tolerable evidence, from some of the authors whom he has already used in this discussion, that the whole of the sacred books of the Jews were destroyed during their captivity, and had to be re-written. If he will tell us that that is so, then it would dispose of the whole of the position he has put to you; and I will press him still farther, that even when he has shown, which he never will, that each one of the books of the Old Testament was written by some individual, was published at a particular time, and was current from that time forward, he will not have gone one step forward then to prove they are a divine revelation; because no one doubts that the Koran has been current from the time of Mahomed, but it does not prove it to be

a divine revelation, although Mahomed pretended it to be one, and a very large number of people believe it to be one. Then we have to do what I suggested last night—examine the book, and see whether the contents of it are consistent with the character which, under any fair definition of Deity, is to be attributed to Deity; whether the internal statements agree with themselves, and whether they agree with science. And I put some very flat contradictions last night to Mr. Roberts, not one of which he has touched to-night. Why did he not, when he was dealing with the resurrection of Jesus, say whether he believed it was one woman who went first to the tomb, according to one Gospel, or two, according to another, or more than two, according to another? and why did he not give us his reasons for accepting one and disbelieving the rest. He relies on the resurrection; but if the story be full of contradictions, how can it be God's divine revelation? Mr. Roberts has neglected all this, and made some speeches about matters entirely unconnected with it. Now, if you please, I will draw your attention to the New Testament, because it shows the utter recklessness of the language Mr. Roberts uses. He talks of this book (the Bible) representing the archives of the Jews. Now, evidently, he could not refer to the New Testament, because the Jews do not acknowledge a single page of it. Then I will say that, when you come to the New Testament, that of the Gospels attributed to Matthew, to Mark, to Luke, and to John, there is not a particle of evidence, not an iota of evidence, to connect any of the persons named Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, with any one of those Gospels; and until something is done of this kind, I say the Four Gospels cannot be shown to have been in existence at all before the year A.D. 150, that is 120 years at least after the alleged date of the death of Jesus; and until something of this kind is done, the authenticity question ought to be given up. And, then, even supposing this were done, Mr. Roberts has the whole mass of contradictions in the history of Jesus; and until they are cleared away, it is no use talking of outside testimony; you have got to get the inside of the book; let him explain the contradiction about the forty days, let him explain the contradiction about the woman who went to the tomb; let him explain the contradictions that I have pointed out as to the parentage of Jesus; let him deal with all these things step by step, and not say, "I have only six minutes," and then, when he has the time, to leave it undone. Now, if you please, what is the case we are to take? As far as evidence goes, for to-night, a reiteration of two statements—one that there are Jews, and another that there are corrupt Christians. But, really, if that is to make any kind of evidence, the same kind of evidence can be pleaded in favour of every religious book of every people in the world, and you must do something much more definite than anything of this kind. I will tell you why I submit to you that the Bible is not a revelation from God, by God meaning—in the sense in which I gave it last night, a sense which has not been corrected—an omnipotent, an omnipresent, omniscient, an infinite, an eternal, an all-good, person. When Mr. Roberts says that he means a primal creative energy, clearly the Bible reveals either something much clearer than that, or nothing at all; it reveals a God who could be seen, and who could not be seen; it reveals a God who knew everything, and did not know some things; a God unchangeable, continually changing; a God all-wise, repenting and grieving at the unanticipated failure of His plans; it reveals a God who was everywhere, but who lived somewhere above, and who came down occasionally. This is, I submit to you, the revelation of the Deity in this book, and it is no use making statements outside that until these are dealt with. I gave Mr. Roberts, last night, a mass of texts not one of which has been answered, and I will now give you several additional texts which seem to show to me that the Bible cannot possibly be a revelation from an all-good God. And I will take you first to the 21st chapter of Exodus. Last night I confined myself to matters of fact; now I am coming to matters of legislation. Mr. Roberts says the existence of the Jews is a fact in his favour. Now, here are the laws supposed to be given in a divine revelation for those Jews: "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing"—this is in Exodus the 21st chapter and the 2nd verse—"If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-

post, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever." Now, I say that there is nothing divine in that, and I say it is not even human. The tendency of modern legislation and civilisation is to introduce a state of society exactly the opposite of that. I say that any half dozen men who were to pass such a law as that in any civilised community would be condemned as inhuman, would be execrated by the voice of to-day; and you cannot suppose that, in any age, that came from an all-good God which to-day's civilisation would reject. You say, "If a master gives his slave a wife," why! that presumes that a master has a right to have a slave wife! a woman from whom he may breed a race of slaves, and that if the servant insists on his own freedom at the end of the time, that he is to go, and leave the wife and the children in the custody of the master; and that if he loves his wife and children enough to stay with them, the reward he is to get for that, according to this book, is that he is to lose his liberty for ever. Now, I will give you next Leviticus, chapter xxvi, verses 44 to 46, because, while Exdous shows you how this legislation deals with the Jews, Leviticus shows you how the laws deal with the heathen. That runs in this way: "Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with us, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever." That is the law as to the heathen; then it goes on to say that, "over your brethren the children of Israel ye shall not rule with rigour." And you have two distinct laws here, one affecting the Jews, from Exodus, another affecting the heathen: and God, according, to Mr. Roberts, approves of slavery, thinks that people may buy and sell slaves, breed and get slaves, and keep slaves for ever. And I say, instead of that being divine, it is most inhuman; I say that doctrine made the most horrible slavery persistent in America; I say the consequence of texts existing like this was, that when William Lloyd Garrison wanted a Christian Church, to preach in, in Boston, on slavery, it was denied him, and he was obliged to have the only Infidel hall in Boston, because there was no other platform admitted to him. Samuel James May, a religious man, tells you how he was not allowed to preach in any of the churches where he had been formerly allowed to preach when he became secretary to the Abolition Society; and in Whittier's works you will find in one of his grandest poems a denunciation of the South Carolina clergy, where they held a demonstration in all their churches in favour of slavery. I say this slavery is a horrible doctrine, a wicked and damnable doctrine, which has cursed human-kind, and you can only defend it here to-night by telling me that this book came out in the childhood and infancy of the world, when people did not understand what freedom was. Its brutal and barbarous legislation has grown out of the character of its authors. It belongs to the far-off past. Now I will come to the question of legislation on difference of religious opinions. And I will take you now to Deuteronomy, chapter xiii, verse 6: 'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth, thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shalt thine eyes pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die.' Now I say that is a doctrine which an all-wise and all-good and all-merciful God would never preach to human-kind; it shows a bigotry, it shows a weakness, it shows an indisposition to listen to reason. Why! what would even be the doctrine Mr. Roberts would advocate, as evinced by his opposition to me here? When he meets an Infidel, instead of his hand being upon him to stone him to death, he challenges him to debate, to persuade him out of the opinion he thinks erroneous, while, according to the authentic revelation, what he ought to have done was to have killed me. His humanity rebels against that, and he will have nothing whatever to do with it. Now, if that is so, is it not evidence that he cannot think that book an evidence of divine revelation? Then I will refer

you to Numbers xxxi. 17, as illustrating the sort of doctrine that God thought fit to recommend in cases of war. I hold the doctrine that all offensive war is bad. That war except in defence of liberty is never justifiable. I do not know how far anyone who believes in the Bible would agree with that. I suppose those who believe in the Bible would think that war is good, because war is so strongly recommended in the early part or it. Killing the people you quarrel with, destroying all their cities, butchering their men, wives, and mothers, only sparing the women, who would be the subjects of your lusts: I say that all that is provided for here. I will not read to you, as I might, but simply refer you to Numbers xxxi. 17, and if it be challenged, I will read you thirty or forty texts worse than that. I say, while you find texts like that in the book, it is no use telling me something that Festus said, or something that somebody else ought to have said. Deal with the book itself, and clear its blemishes away. I will have to draw my friend's attention to the point raised by him last night on the question of chronology. He quoted, as evidence for the Bible, the Septuagint; he referred to some passage in Josephus, but did not read it. I have not looked at the passage in Josephus recently. If my memory serves me rightly—and I am not quite sure it does—Josephus vouches nothing more than a translation of the Pentateuch; and I do not deny that the rolls of the Pentateuch have been in existence for a very long period prior to the Christian era. I should be simply a madman to attempt to deny anything of the kind; but what I do deny is, that you can identify the Pentateuch we have here with the rolls of the Pentateuch that did exist prior to the Christian era. I say that there is no Pentateuch roll which can be carried back earlier than the famous Darghestan roll; and I say that that comes nearly 600 years on this side of the Christian era by the contention of its best men—580 odd years; and I urge to you that the very matter in dispute between Mr. Roberts and myself turns on this. I do not pretend the Bible to be a forgery—I have not pretended it in any fashion; but I do pretend it to be, like every other religious book, an outgrowth of different ages, of different men, of different peoples, bundled together without one reason for bundling it together, and which cannot be contended to be a complete, coherent book under any circumstances whatever. I do not contend that, from the time of Solomon forward, it may not be possible that every king recorded in the Bible may possibly have ruled; but that will not make out one iota of evidence against me. You have got to prove the facts that I challenge, and to explain the difficulties I submit to be explained; you have got to prove that the theories I impeach fit into your doctrine of divine revelation, or you do nothing at all. Now we have got to the second night of this debate, and I submit to you that we have not got the shadow of a scintilla of evidence, because all that has been sought to be done is to show you that some people called Christians are in existence, which I do not dispute. Then we were told that all the Apostles lost their lives, and then Mr. Roberts thought some of them did not. Now, I will ask him to find a reliable account of the martyrdom of any one of them, and I will ask him even then how far he has advanced his proof, because there have been people martyred for every religion in the world. There have been martyrs for every heresy. Martyrdom is no voucher of the divinity of the book. I will show you that, when Jesus was in danger, his disciples ran away, and his most trusty disciple denied him over and over again. And I ask you, if Peter, who knew from heaven itself that Jesus was from heaven, denied him, how can you expect me to believe the Bible on Peter's authority—that authority even unvouched? I will not weary you at present with any examination of the New Testament, because, if we begin the subject, let us begin it at the beginning; and I will ask whether it is not true that each of the accounts of the Creation in the first and second chapters of Genesis contradicts the other? And I say the book is anonymous—you do not know when, or where, or by whom, it was written—and that you cannot prove that the Hebrew language existed at the time Moses lived; and, until you have done that, it is no use telling me the writings were in current circulation at the time they were supposed to be written and issued. Let us have the book of Genesis proved first, and my objections to the Books of the Pentateuch first. Then we will go on step by step, and get a little further. Has there been any attempt here to-night to show you that the objections I stated last night from the Bible are not fairly taken? I say, Not one. I will give you again the texts: Exodus xxxii. 7-14, comparing that with Exodus xxviii. 1, xxxii. 28, 35; Numbers xxiii. 19; 1 Samuel xv. 29; Malachi iii. 6;

2 Kings xx. 1-11; 2 Samuel xxiv. 15, 16; Genesis vi. 6; 1 Samuel xv. 11; Genesis xviii. 20, 21; Deuteronomy viii. 2; 2 Chronicles xxi. 15. I commented on the horrible story of the God-invented Fall, I impeached the history of the humanity-destroying Flood, and not one of those points has been touched from the other side. (Time called.)

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

Mr. Bradlaugh, you have admitted the reliability of the evidence of Tacitus and of Pliny to the fact that there existed a large Christian community at the end of the first century, and that they were the subjects of persecution?—I have not admitted the reliability of the quotation from Tacitus. I am inclined to think that the quotation from Tacitus is liable to impeachment. I think the letter of Pliny is a fairly historic document.

You admit the existence of a Christian community at the end of the first century?—I do not admit the existence of a Christian community at the end of the first century only; I think I can show the existence of what you call a Christian community prior to Christ.

But at all events after Christ?—And I say that the same community I think I can show before.

That is another point. It is sufficient for my present question that you admit the existence of a Christian community at the end of the first century?—I admit the continued existence of a community traceable back prior to the alleged birth of Christ.

My question does not relate—My answer relates to my opinion on the subject.

You must hear my question before you answer it. Do you deny that there existed at the end of the first century a Christian community?—I admit that the sect sometimes called Therapeutæ, sometimes called Essenes or Essean, sometimes called by other names, is found prior to the time of Christ, as evidenced by Philo, and that that same sect, sometimes called Christians, and sometimes by other names, may be traced afterwards.

Then it did exist at the close of the first century?—And prior to the first century.

Did it exist at the close of the first century—yes or no?—I can give no further answer.

You can say yes?—I must answer in my own way.

Why are you afraid to say yes? Having admitted there were Christians at the close of the first century, were there writings in circulation amongst them?—I have not the slightest evidence of any identifiable writings in circulation amongst the Christians to whom Pliny refers.

I did not say "identifiable writings;" I said "writings?"—I cannot speak of writings that cannot be identified, for I know nothing of them.

Yes; you might know of the existence of writings that you cannot identify, and I ask whether or not you believe there did exist writings in circulation among them?—If you will describe the writings I will answer you.

I purposely do not describe them?—Then I refuse to answer.

Then you refuse to say whether or not, in your opinion, there were any writings in circulation amongst them?—I refuse to give an answer which will not be of the slightest value.

Then you refuse to answer the question I put?—Give me something that I can identify in my mind, and I will tell you whether I have any evidence of the existence of that or not. I cannot answer on the vague word "writings," because I believe that ever since written language has been used, the people amongst whom the use of written language obtained have had writings.

Did written language obtain amongst the Christians?—Yes.

Did they have among them writings setting forth the facts of their religion?—I do not know.

In your reply to the Bishop of Lincoln you say: "In the early ages of the Christian Church, forgeries of Apostolic writings were common." I want to know if there were genuine Apostolic writings?—I never saw any.

Do you believe there were forged ones?—I believe that there was a huge multitude of forged writings, and that nearly nine-tenths at least have been abandoned by the Christians themselves.

Does that not prove the existence of genuine ones somewhere?—I do not know that it does; I do not know that the existence of an imitation dragon proves a real one.

Do you mean to say that there can be a counterfeit coin without a genuine one?—Oh yes, if you will travel on the Continent, you will find a good many of them.

Do you mean to say that the idea of genuine coin does not precede the fact of counterfeit?—I do not know.

You do not know?—No.

I will be content with that answer.—What I do know is, that people who want to be dishonest will avail themselves of any means which they think will give effect to their scheme of dishonesty, and that is all I know.

Do you think the Apostles were dishonest men?—I don't know even that they existed; so I cannot call them "dishonest men."

Then what do you mean by forgeries of Apostolic writings?—I mean that there were writings which pretended to be writings of Apostles, when they were only forged writings by people who were not Apostles.

Were there such men as Apostles?—Of every faith; yes.

Of Jesus of Nazareth?—When?

In the first century?—I do not know.

May there have been?—Oh yes, and there may not.

Is it probable or not that they wrote?—I don't know. You say they were ignorant men; and they may not have known how to write.

One of them was not ignorant.—Which?

Paul?—I don't know anything about Paul.

I have in my hands a book—a compilation of Epistles, each of which begins with an introduction similar to this: "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." How do you disprove that Epistle?—It is not my business to disprove it; it is yours to prove it.

I have read a letter supposed to be addressed by Jesus to a king. It is not my business to disprove those things: it is yours to prove them.

You have admitted that Eusebius is a historian who lived, and whose writings are to be trusted?—No; I have not. On the contrary, I have said that Eusebius lived and wrote; and I also said that he was a party to the issue of many forgeries.

Do you believe that he lived in the beginning of the fourth century?—Yes.

Do you believe that, living at that time, he had materials—better materials than either you or I have—of judging whether these were genuine writings or not?—I am quite sure that he *made* materials; and if you give me, as you have it, his "Ecclesiastical History," I will give you instances of several that he made or circulated unjustifiably.

I refer my question to a particular point, to which I wish to call your attention. He lived 1500 years ago or thereabouts. My question is, whether or not you admit that at that time it was easier to judge—by reason of the great number of books then existing which have since perished—upon the question of whether these were authentic or not?—I don't suppose so many books existed in the fourth century as now.

Then, do you deny he was in a better position than you to judge?—I don't suppose that he was in so good a position, because I believe he invented some times. If you give me the writings of Eusebius you refer to, I will give you the evidence of my statement. I am not producing Eusebius; you are.

I am producing Eusebius in order to show that in his judgment these Epistles were written by the Apostle Paul, and the Gospels written by those whose names they bear.—And I say that the statements in Eusebius will not prove that the Gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear; but, on the contrary, will, at least in one case, prove exactly the opposite, and, if you will lend me Eusebius, I will show you.

No, I will be content with your answer, Mr. Bradlaugh—content, ironically, of course, you understand. Do you think it probable that a community, or a movement which has given a religion to all the civilised nations of Europe, should have existed and

effected that revolution without authentic writings?—Up to the year A.D. 1000 the Christian religion had not given itself to Europe. The bulk of Europe up to that time did not accept it.

I am speaking of the present fact, the present day—1876.—Then the present day proves no more than Utah, being full of Mormons, proves that Mormonism is true.

I am speaking of the existence of the book.—I do not deny the existence of the book to-day ; it is sold at 4d. a copy.

A book is *primâ facie* evidence of itself until it is disproved.—Then the book of Mormon is proof of itself until it is disproved.

And I shall be prepared to disprove it.—Do it.

One thing at a time. I ask you how you disprove that the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians was written by Paul?—That is not my business : It is your business to prove that it was written by him.

It is *primâ facie* evidence of itself?—No ; but it is not until you, by external evidence, have proved the authenticity of the book from which you quote ; you have not the slightest right to read its contents as evidence against me.

Then you cannot get rid of this *primâ facie* evidence?—It is not *primâ facie* evidence. We disagree as to the meaning of the words.

The 1st Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians exists with a profession on the face of it that it was written by Paul : can you disprove that profession?—Then Mahomedanism is true, and the evidence is this : the Koran exists. Can you disprove the evidence of the Koran ?

Yes.—Do it.

This is not the time. Can you disprove that? (Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.)—I have disproved the reliability of the Bible by quoting an abundance of contradictory texts from it.

The 1st Epistle to the Corinthians : that is my question.—I have no other answer to give to that.

Then you cannot disprove it?—My business is not to disprove every statement you make without evidence.

Here is the book ; it is *primâ facie* evidence of itself until it is disproved?—No, it is not. The book stating that a devil went into the pigs is not evidence until it is proved. You have got to show the evidence outside the books.

Then Mr. Bradlaugh fails in dislodging the basis of my argument to-night ; he confesses his inability to disprove the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians as the production of Paul.—I have only said it is not my business. The moment you give any evidence of it I will answer that evidence.

Will it not destroy my argument if you disprove it?—But there is nothing to disprove : you have called no witness.

I have called the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.—You have not proved it in the smallest degree.

It is proved by the unanimous consent of a hundred generations.—So is the Koran proved by the unanimous consent of a hundred generations, and many a falsehood in the world by an equal number of generations.

And if they were not capable of being disproved, we should be bound to receive them ; but they can be disproved. Can you disprove the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians?—Generally, on the Bible, I have tried to, and you have not answered one of the texts I have given.

You say it is not your business?—On the contrary, I say that the Book of Genesis contradicts itself, and that the Gospels contradict themselves ; and until you answer that, your case is disproved.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

Did I understand you last night to say that the chronology in the Septuagint differed from the chronologies in the authorised English version?—Yes.

Which chronology is true?—The Hebrew.

How do you know that the Hebrew chronology is more true than that in the

Septuagint?--By a process of argument which would be too extensive to rehearse to-night.

I would like to have it.--I cannot do it in the time.

When will you?---In a lecture.

But now?---I have not time.

Do you mean that during the whole of the debate you will have no time to explain why you accept the Hebrew chronology, and reject the Septuagint?---With the immense argument I have to unfold, I do say I have not time.

Then, as you say that the Hebrew chronology is true, and the Septuagint chronology is not true, how do you account for a book, which you say was translated from a divine revelation, having an incorrect translation, at least as far as the chronology is concerned?---Because the translation was out of the custody of its safe and divinely-appointed keepers.

Who were the "safe and divinely-appointed keepers" of the original revelation?--- I answer by quoting the Apostle Paul in the third chapter of Romans: "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? . . . chiefly because that *unto them were committed the oracles of God.*"

Will you be kind enough to show me any evidence prior to the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, when you say the Septuagint translation was made, that the "original revelation was in the custody of" its safe and divinely-appointed keepers? Who do you say were the custodians of these writings? Tell me where kept, the town they were kept in, and the people who, you say, had the custody of them?--- That is rather an extensive question; break it up.

Well, name the town where they were kept, first?---Shiloh, first.

When were they kept in Shiloh? from what date to what date?---Just after Joshua's conquest of Canaan by the tribes of Israel.

Where shall I find any evidence of that?---In the Book of Joshua.

Will you kindly quote me chapter and verse for that?---Yes, I will (after turning over a Bible for some time): Judges xviii. 31.

Do you rely on that text?---Wait a moment; let me give you my answer.

Don't you know there is not a word about any of the books being kept in Shiloh in that text?---Yes; that is only a part of my answer.

But where have you any evidence that at, or about, the time of Joshua any books were kept in Shiloh?---This is the first part of my answer. My answer is not complete. I prove here that the house of God was at Shiloh. I will next prove that the house of God contained the ark, and that the ark contained the books of Moses.

I am content to accept any evidence. Give me some.--I will give you the evidence (referring to the Bible).

I say that there is not a particle of evidence of the existence of any books about the time of Joshua in Shiloh.--Then I will prove it.

That is what I want you to do.--Deuteronomy xxxi. 24: "It came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."

Where does that show that the five books you call the books of Moses were kept in Shiloh after the time of Joshua?---It shows that Moses commanded the Levites to put it there, and I must next prove that the Levites put it there. I ought to have begun by quoting the command of God to Moses.

I must ask you not to make speeches, but to give me the evidence. Please identify the book of the law with the five books?---I am dealing with the evidence to which I am alluding. In Exodus xxv. 16, we have the command that I ought to have quoted first--the command of God to Moses: "Thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee."

Exodus xxv. 16: I will read it: "Thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee." Will you show me how I am to make that prove that the first five books, which you call the Books of Moses, were kept in Shiloh at the time of Joshua?---And in Numbers iii. 31 we have the duty of the priests to take charge of the ark and its contents.

Numbers iii. 31: "Their charge shall be in the ark, and the table, and the candlestick

and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof." How does that prove that the first five books were in Shiloh after the time of Joshua?—It establishes a line of evidence, which a critical mind ought to be able to see.

Oh! does it?—Yes. Well, I think I need not attempt at present to continue this.

Do you mean you have given all the evidence you can?—No. I will undertake, when I have time, to do it.

When will you undertake to do it? On which night of the debate? Choose your own night.—I had better promise generally—before the discussion is out.

But "generally" means no time at all?—I don't like to commit myself to anything I am not sure of doing.

Do you mean to say that you cannot do it?—I am quite sure of my ability to do it.

What date do you say was the date of Joshua?—As a man?

You have spoken of "Joshua."—Do you mean Joshua as a man or a book?

I mean it in the sense you have used it.—I have used it in both senses.

When you said the five books were in Shiloh about the time of Joshua, I want to know in years, *Anno Mundi*, what time you meant?—Well, I suppose it would be in round numbers, somewhere about 1,500 years before Christ.

"Somewhere about 1,500 years" before the Christian era. Is there a particle of evidence outside the Bible of the existence of Hebrew as a written language at that date?—The Bible is sufficient evidence.

Just answer my question: Is there a particle of evidence outside the Bible of the existence of Hebrew as a written language at that date?—Yes, there is.

Give it me?—I cannot—not now.

Will you undertake to give me that evidence any night during this debate?—You are putting on me rather too much work, Mr. Bradlaugh.

Oh! I will put on you more than that; that is only a trifle. Will you undertake on any night during this debate to give that evidence—yes or no?—The Bible is such good evidence that I undertake to produce no other, although I believe there is.

Why do you believe there is any other evidence?—From scattered information I have gleaned in general reading.

Where?—General reading.

Where?—Everywhere.

Name an author?—All authors who have written on the subject with whom I have come in contact.

Name one that you have come in contact with?—The question is so frivolous I refuse to answer.

Then under those circumstances I decline to put any more questions.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Roberts will now have a quarter of an hour's speech.

Mr. ROBERTS: Mr. Bradlaugh occupied a considerable portion of his half hour's speech in reminding me of what he considered my failures. I have to remind him of what is a much greater failure on his part, and that is to deal with the positive argument in so far as I have unfolded it. I grant I have not yet conducted it very far; but, so far as I have carried it, Mr. Bradlaugh has not attempted to deal with it. Some of his difficulties I will deal with. At none of them am I frightened. In fact, I could like nothing better than a public test on this point in such a form as would admit of a thorough investigation. It is impossible, in the limit of six nights, conducted in this way, to go into the thing in that thorough, exhaustive, and critical manner that would be necessary for the full illustration of the whole of the bearings of the case. I am, therefore, obliged to content myself with a wise way of dealing with the question in a limited time—viz., the plan of seizing hold of those positive, unquestionable facts which Mr. Bradlaugh himself dare not deny, and which, when logically construed, yield the general conclusions for which I am contending, notwithstanding all those little bits of exceptions which he was taking, and discrepancies which he was urging, as regards the general contents of the Bible. I will undertake, in a thorough legal investigation, in the presence of a judge—so to speak—in which Mr. B. shall question me for so long, and make a speech on my answers, and I question him, and make a speech on his answers, and so forth—I would undertake, under those circumstances, to deal with

every single item that he can produce in the way of general discrepancy; and, under such circumstances, I would undertake that every single difficulty that could be brought forward would melt away in the process. But, meanwhile, it would be most unwise in me to go grappling with the difficulties before I have marshalled the general evidence before you. It is my business to present these evidences, and it is Mr. Bradlaugh's business to deal with my general demonstration of the positive case, instead of trying to drown my argument with little points, that are not in reality inconsistent with it.

Now, pursuing the general argument, I resume the thread which I was obliged to break, or to drop, at the close of my first half-hour's speech. I was then showing that the apostles did not expect Christ to die. I will now show that, being dead, they did not expect him to rise. In John xx. 9: "As yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." I will next show that, when he did rise, they did not believe it in the first case—all of which goes to show that there was no predisposition in their minds to entertain any fantasy on the subject, and that, therefore, the theory of hallucination relied on by those who deny the certainty of Christ's resurrection is inconsistent with the facts. The evidence on that point is to be found, amongst other places, in Luke xxiv. 10, 11: "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Then in Mark xvi. 14 we have this statement: "Afterwards he (Jesus) appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." How came they, then, not expecting him to rise, and not believing the testimony of those who had seen him rise; how came they to believe in the fact of his having risen, and to give their lives and their well-being for the sake of their testimony to that fact? The answer is to be found in testimony which I have partly quoted in the earlier part of the argument. Peter says—speaking of himself and the other apostles—"We did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."—(Acts x. 41). One case in particular illustrates the scepticism of the apostolic band as regarded the first report of his resurrection, and also illustrates the means by which that scepticism was dissipated, and a firm faith lodged in its place; and we shall see that it is a faith placed upon actual personal witness, and not at all upon any fantasy, such as might be supposed to be nursed in a heated imagination. In John xx. 24, it is stated: "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came"—that is, the time of his first interview with the ten disciples—"the other disciples, therefore, said unto him, We have seen the Lord; but he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in their midst, and said, Peace be unto you! Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God! Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." In Luke xxiv. we find the whole of the apostolic band assembled together at an early period of the day of Christ's resurrection; and they are eagerly discussing the flying rumours they are hearing—first, the report of the women, afterwards, the report of Peter, to whom Christ had separately appeared, then the report of two of the disciples who went on a journey to Emmaus, and to whom Jesus made himself known. We are told in Luke xxiv. 33: "The eleven were gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon! And they (the two who went to Emmaus) told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace be unto you! But they were terrified and affrighted." Observe that, if this was a concocted story intended to create the notion—the false notion in that case—that Christ had risen, when he had not, you would not have found all these statements about the disciples not believing, and about them being terrified, and so on. They supposed they had seen a spirit or phantom; they supposed it was not the real Christ. "And he said unto them, why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself;

handle me and see: for a spirit"—a phantom—"hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb; and he took it, and did eat before them."—(Verses 38-43).

Realise the facts, please, for they constitute an explanation of the great bravery of the apostles in their testimony afterwards, for which they gave their lives.

The Pharisees (Matt. xxvii. 63), remembered that Christ had said that he would rise again after his death, and they asked Pilate to set a watch over his grave after his death, that there might be no doubt as to the fact of death having taken him and kept him, and, therefore, as to the fact of his being an impostor. What story have the Jews now as to the fact, which both Jew and Gentile admit, that the body of Christ was never found, but that the grave was empty? for all the people in Jerusalem at the time were witnesses to that. They say "his disciples stole him while the watch slept." Do you believe that story, that the disciples stole the body of Christ? What object could they have in stealing away a dead body? How could they steal a body with a numerous guard assembled round the sepulchre? They were a scattered and demoralised band. Yet afterwards they appeared in Jerusalem, and declared Christ had risen.

Thousands believed their testimony. Why? Was it because these men, in a fervid and an earnest manner proclaimed their belief in what might have been an illusion? No; the personal witness of the apostles was only one element in the evidence that persuaded thousands of Jews and Gentiles throughout the whole of the Roman Empire that Jesus of Nazareth, crucified by Pontius Pilate, had risen. The New Testament account is that God confirmed the testimony of the apostles by granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands; and I call upon Mr. Bradlaugh to account for the wide-spread reception of their testimony, if that account or explanation of it is not the correct one. Not only were the apostles personal witnesses of the fact of Christ's resurrection, but Christ endowed them with power to do things that constitute the confirmation of their testimony. God invited men to believe in the resurrection of His Son, but He did not unreasonably ask them to believe without evidence. He gave evidence; He placed the seal of His confirmation upon their testimony by fulfilling the promise Christ left them before his ascension. What promise was that? Before Christ parted from them he commanded them, we are told in Acts i. 4, that they should "not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which said he, ye have heard of me." What promise? Here is the promise: John xiv. 26; xv. 26: "The Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I understand Mr. Roberts now to say that it is impossible for him to prove his case in six nights. Then he ought not to have challenged me to this debate. He says he could do it before a judge and jury. He selected his own tribunal—a public audience. He says that all the points I have taken would melt away to nothing when investigated one by one. Why does he not do it then, one by one? He has not touched one. He says he can do it, and yet he does not do it; and if he can do it, and does not do it, then he is guilty of not being loyal to the cause he is here to defend. Then he has referred to the texts, and still avoided the points; he actually referred to the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke again, and did not say a word about my challenge as to the six weeks of Christ's alleged appearance after the resurrection. He referred to the tenth verse, about the woman, and did not say a word about that text contradicting the texts in other gospels as to the number of those women. It is not debating to do that; reading a number of texts of Scripture without giving any evidence of them. The question to be debated is, "Are the Scriptures the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation?" and Mr. Roberts said that by "authentic" he really meant written by the persons by whom they professed to have been written, and at the times they professed to have been written; and when questioned as to books supposed to have been in existence 1500 B.C., he

says that involves matter he is not prepared to give, when it is the very point he ought to have been prepared to state. You cannot say that when questioning him I did not wait with the utmost patience: I waited two minutes by the clock for one portion, three minutes for another, and two minutes and a quarter for another: I did not say one word; and he only said, when pressed for the evidence of his statement, that he was not prepared to give it. Asked for some evidence, he answers that I am pressing him too hardly. Pressed as to the authenticity of the first five books he does nothing. If he has not come to prove that, he came to prove nothing, and yet he has to confess, in answer to my questions, that on that point he is not prepared to answer. Well, then, he tells you that Gentiles and Jews admit that the body of Christ could not be found. Well, that is about as wild a saying as it is possible to give, and I dare him to produce me the writings of any Jewish Rabbi of any note at all containing any such admission. I do not pretend to be well read in Rabbinical writings; I have gone through a few volumes relating to them—not many, but I have not yet found a trace of an allegation of any such admission. I think I have read nearly every Christian evidence writing, and I have never seen a quotation from any Jewish Rabbi about anything of the kind, and I say it is utterly reckless—I do not mean it any way unfairly, but only showing that there is an utter looseness and carelessness in this debate about the meaning of words. Mr. Roberts seems to think if he reads statements out of the Bible, he has proved those statements to be true, and then he asks me to explain the wide-spread acceptance of it. But the wide-spread acceptance of a doctrine does not prove it to be true. Buddhism and Brahminism are widely accepted, but that is no proof that they are true. As to Christianity, the “wide-spreading” of it was done by the sabre, by the rack, by the prison, by the fagot, not by the internal evidences of the book. I could quote you from Christian history, going from about the fifth century to the thirteenth, and show you that the people were induced to profess to believe this simply by killing them if they did not believe it. Every religion that has a large number of converts is wide-spread, and if that is evidence of the truth of it, the verdict goes by the majority, and as it is only the minority that believe Christianity, then Christianity is wrong. Well, now, let us, if you please, just see what we have really got; we have had in the last speech—I think I should be within bounds in saying—two-thirds of the quarter of an hour occupied in reading portions of the Bible, and not one reference during that time to the contradictions I had drawn attention to; although on the very question of the resurrection I had pointed out that there were contradictions as to the three days and three nights; although as to the women who went to the sepulchre, I pointed out a distinct contradiction there; although as to the period Christ is stated to have been on the earth after his resurrection, I pointed out a distinct contradiction. All he tells you is what he could do in some other place and circumstances. But if he could not do it here, he should not have been here. Now, if you please, just see the position we are in; not one date alleged for the Book of Genesis, not one author tried to be proved for it; not one date alleged for the Book of Exodus, not one author tried to be proved for it; not one date alleged for the Book of Leviticus, not one author tried to be proved for it; not one date alleged for the Book of Numbers, not one author tried to be proved for it; not one date alleged for the Book of Deuteronomy, not one author tried to be proved for it; a statement, for which there is no foundation whatever, was made that in the time of Joshua these five books were kept in a place called Shiloh. When we have got some statement of that kind, of which there is not a particle of evidence here, then I shall want some proof of the place called Shiloh, and I think Mr. Roberts will find he has got his work to do there. And I shall want proof of any evidence in the world that there were manuscripts existing at that time; and I will show you, from the size of the ark, and the only fashion of record common to the country where the Jews were in the alleged time of Moses, that it would be simply impossible that you could have had anything of the kind. I said to Mr. Roberts, “Give some *prima facie* evidence,” and he said, “O! I will do it some night in the debate; I am not quite sure I shall do it at all;” and I am sure you cannot do it at all. But that is what he ought to have done in his first speech. He has jumped over the whole of the Old Testament, and thinks that by reading from the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, that he proves the authenticity of the

whole of the Bible. Why! reading the Lord's Prayer will not prove the truth of the rest of the Book. Reading some story—and what have we had? a curious story; a story of Jesus appearing to two disciples going to Emmaus; while they could see him they did not know him, and directly they could not see him, knew him; and that is the best evidence he can give you. Why! if it were submitted to sane people as an event of to-day, only one verdict could be come to. How is this debate to go on? I am asked about the "widespread." Shall I deal with the "wide-spread," step by step? If you appeal to the wide-spread, I must take it as I find it; and what do I find this Church to be? I find it, in its earlier ages, to be a Church that made its way by fraud, by forgery, by assassination, and by perjury; I find it described by its own ministers as full of licentiousness and corruption; find that as it grew it incited wars all through Europe; took the side of king against people, and enslaving the people; I find it crushing out the possibility of education, and so destroying philosophy that it is only to the Moors we owe the preservation of great thought. If you want the spread, take the spread as it was through the centuries of gloom and ignorance, and the only gleam of light you will find in it is during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, when the bloody Crusades, and the ruined cities, and the burnt homes showed in bright relief the humanity of your Christianity. If you want the spread, take it in the early part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; take it under John of Burgundy and Charles the Bold, and under Charles and Louis of France. Take it when the Church aided to destroy the toiling burghers of Dinant. Take it when the priests of this book cursed the city, when they stood by while the duke and king razed every house to the ground! You talk of divine revelation! In the names of the murdered women of Dinant I impeach the faith founded on it. I say the whole history of it has been a history of cruelty, of fraud and of crime, until civilisation, struggling out, despite the whole hindrances of your superstition, has purified your religion despite itself. I should have been content, if anything like evidence had been given, to answer that evidence; I should have been content, if texts had been examined, to go through text by text. I am told I have piled up a bundle of texts. Yes; and I could have made it tenfold. Instead of any answer, I am referred to the "wide-spread" of it! "Wide-spread" of it! Where will you take it to-day? Which is it? Rome, England, Nonconformists, Unitarians, Trinitarians? Do not tell me about the "wide-spread," when there are a hundred sects cursing and damning one another, and at the present moment preparing for war against one another right through Europe! "Wide-spread" of it! Why, if you want any proof that it is not authentic, it is that it has failed to dominate mankind in the interest of humanity; if you want any proof of it, it is that the clergy are obliged to admit that belief in this book is disappearing as education increases; if you want any proof that it is not a Divine revelation, it is that while this version is urged to you as God's only message to man, a committee are now sitting to make out a new one! Friends, I will not intrude any longer on your attention, because I have exhausted, within a minute or two, the time allotted to me, but I must ask you to bear with me while I point out what my opponent ought to have done, and what he ought not to have done, because, practically, in the quarter of an hour to come, it will be divided into two short speeches. According to my friend's own contention he should have given you some evidence of the authenticity of the book. He has given you none. He should have been prepared to defend the morality of the book; but he has not answered what I said about slavery and murder, and the contradictions in the character of God; he has only read to you about Jesus being dead, and eating broiled fish and honeycomb when he was dead, and he apparently thinks that this passes in lieu of proof. And then he says it is impossible to do it in six nights. Then cease the debate at once; do not take six nights, and do not waste time in the unavailing attempt to do it. He says he can do it before a judge and jury, instead of which he is bound to do it before the tribunal he himself has chosen, a sensible and intelligent audience of Leicester men, who are able to form an opinion, and who will only have one verdict to give. [A pause.]

Mr. ROBERTS: I was only asking the chairman that I might have a quarter of an hour for the conclusion of my argument, but it seems we are pledged to close at 10

o'clock, and, therefore, I must submit to the partition of the remaining time. I have, therefore, to say that Mr. Bradlaugh has either misunderstood or deliberately misrepresented my argument about the wide-spread reception. I did not refer to the wide-spread reception of the Christian tradition in the 19th century: I alluded to the wide-spread belief engendered in the mind of the Roman public in the first century, according to his own admission, in the face of all manner of pains and penalties, And what I ask him to do is to reconcile that undoubted historic phenomenon with any notion of Christ's not having risen from the dead, and of the disciples expressly declaring what they believed to be—what they knew to be—not true. I will suppose a parallel case: I will suppose that the people of Leicester were to succeed in some way or another—not possible under our constitution, I admit—in apprehending Mr. Bradlaugh, and hanging him, and his dead body delivered up under official attestation, and buried, and all the Secularists disheartened and squandered; and the Leicester Secularists are found a few weeks after holding public meetings in the Temperance Hall, Leicester, and saying, "Mr. Bradlaugh has risen from the dead;" and the magistrates say, "If you say that, you shall go to prison;" and they say, "Well, we shall go to prison; but we declare that to be true, for we have seen him; we are not speaking of a mere opinion of our own; we rest our declaration on personal experience." And suppose that, in spite of their imprisonment, in spite of their fining, in spite of the assassination of their leading members, these same Secularists go up and down the country, and proclaim that Mr. Bradlaugh has risen from the dead, and that thousands in this enlightened country believe their testimony, notwithstanding pains and penalties that Parliament should decree against the reception of their testimony; then I say that, in that case, you would afterwards have a great historical problem to solve upon some rational principle; and if the facts of the case were equal to the facts in this other case, there would be no rational explanation, apart from the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh had really risen. In fact, the case could not occur apart from the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh had really risen from the dead, and that his followers had seen and conversed with him for a sufficiently long time to make it quite sure that they were not labouring under some hallucination of the senses. And these are the undoubted facts of this case; for Mr. Bradlaugh has admitted the existence of this wide-spread community in the first century, in days when they were persecuted, and attempted to be destroyed by all manner of evil agencies; the central feature of whose contention was that Christ had risen from the dead. I quoted from their authenticated writings, and my argument is not completed, and I am not able to complete it within the six or seven minutes that fall to my lot. Mr. Bradlaugh says I am away from the subject. Surely Mr. Bradlaugh will admit that if I prove Christ's resurrection, I prove him divine.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: And if I prove him divine, I prove that his endorsement of Moses and the prophets is, in itself, a conclusive evidence of the divinity of these documents, apart from all abstruse and difficult questions connected with localities in remote times in which it is difficult almost to identify any place, particularly in profane records, and particularly as affecting other nations. With regard to the Jewish nation, with regard to Jewish localities, with regard to Jewish events, there is more abundant identification, and more definite and circumstantial evidence, than in the case of any nation under heaven.

MR. BRADLAUGH: No.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, of course, Mr. Bradlaugh thinks not; but I declare that to be a fact, which even Sir Isaac Newton alleged to be a fact, as the result of his acquaintance with general literature, that no book of similar antiquity, and no event in history, are so well authenticated, in accordance with all the rules of evidence, as the New Testament and the resurrection of Christ. Mr. Bradlaugh has attempted to represent that I am speaking irrelevantly to the issue, whereas, if the facts I am contending for—which I contended for last night, which I have been contending for to-night, and which I shall contend for in the nights to come—if these are all established, which I am sure they can be, then my case for the Bible is proved, and all Mr. Bradlaugh's objections will be seen in the light of trifling minor and obscure issues, which fall in with and are governed by the incontestible body of evidence that proves the Scriptures to be "the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation."

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I have not admitted, and I carefully guarded my answer to prevent the possibility of such an admission, that there was a body of Christians in the first century believing in the story of Jesus as recorded in the gospels; for I pointed out that the people called Christians were people whom I thought that I identified as existing before Christ, who, therefore, could not have held any such belief; and it is not fair, therefore, to say I admitted it. Hence, I say there is not a particle of evidence given to us, because the reading of the gospels is no evidence until it is shown who wrote the gospels, when they were written, where they were written, and that they did circulate, as Mr. Roberts said he would prove, at the time of the events to which they relate. Now, Mr. Roberts says it is difficult to identify Jewish places. I did not ask him to identify them; he mentioned them, and he should not have mentioned a place he could not identify. Mr. Roberts says something of Sir Isaac Newton; but however good Sir Isaac Newton may be on some subjects, he is no good authority on Egyptian chronology or anything of the kind; because, during the last forty years, Bunsen has opened a field of inquiry of which Sir Isaac Newton and those who preceded him, were necessarily utterly ignorant. Then he says, if I were put to death to-day, and you folks went about saying you had seen me, would not that be conclusive? Well, but there is no evidence of anything of the kind having happened with regard to Jesus. Reading the gospels does not prove it. Reading the other day in the *Daily Telegraph* the story of the Sea Serpent, does not prove that the serpent stretched out thirty feet to bite a mast, more than twice the distance from the surface of the sea, and no sane person would pretend it does. You have got to verify the story before the story can be of the slightest value as to the facts it relates. Then, how do we stand now? Why, nothing whatever has been done. Mr. Roberts in his last speech says they conversed with Jesus for a sufficiently long period to make it clear. But the very period I have challenged as being contradicted in the gospels he quotes, and how can he pretend to keep repeating his statement until he has reconciled that? To say that every little thing can be cleared away, and not doing it, is simply to waste time with a mere verbiage of talk. He has not given me anything whatever to do in the way of reply, and I simply conclude my speech by thanking you for your attention, and by moving a vote of thanks to our chairman for having presided over us so impartially for these two nights.

Mr. ROBERTS having seconded the vote of thanks, the Chairman responded and the meeting closed.

Third Night,

THURSDAY, 15th JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

MR. GEORGE H. ST. CLAIR IN THE CHAIR.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, we are met together to hear a very important question discussed by two gentlemen very competent to discuss it. The question is, "Are the Scriptures the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation?" The discussion of this question was commenced two evenings ago at Leicester, but we shall scarcely be at any disadvantage on that account, inasmuch as separate points are to be taken up each evening. In the agreement made between the two gentlemen it is provided that Mr. Roberts shall lead off with a speech of half an hour's length on the affirmative, that Mr. Bradlaugh shall follow with a speech of the same length on the negative side, then that Mr. Roberts shall have the liberty for a quarter of an hour either of making a speech or of questioning Mr. Bradlaugh: Mr. Bradlaugh to give categorical answers, not making a speech himself, and afterwards Mr. Bradlaugh shall have the same privilege of questioning Mr. Roberts for a quarter of an hour. Thus we shall occupy an hour and a half of our time. For the remaining hour it is arranged that the speakers shall speak alternately for a quarter of an hour at a time. That will bring us to ten o'clock, and at ten o'clock the meeting is to close. You will perceive that this arrangement leaves no room for any remarks to be made by the chairman, and it leaves no room for any interruptions on the part of the audience. It is, indeed, very properly provided that should either disputant be interrupted the time thus wasted—and it will be utterly wasted—shall not count against him; the only result therefore would be to keep the entire meeting to an unnecessarily late hour. Those, therefore, who disturb the public peace will be in a sense enemies of us all. However, I anticipate no interruption; I address you as ladies and gentlemen, and I anticipate nothing but polite conduct on the part of all. I now call upon Mr. Roberts to open the discussion on the affirmative side.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry that so far as this audience is concerned, we have to begin in the middle of the discussion. This is a form of things that I tried to avoid, but was not successful. By what may for the purpose of to-night be described as an awkward twist in the preliminary negotiations, I was compelled to consent to have two nights at Leicester out of six nights which I wanted at Birmingham. I do not now propose to occupy time in paying any further attention to that point, but I thought it necessary to allude to it as a necessary recognition of the awkwardness which I feel to some extent you are placed in and I also. In order, however, that there may be as little disadvantage as possible resulting from that circumstance, I will indicate in sentence or two, so far as that can be done, what has taken place at Leicester.

On the first night I began the argument, at the date at which we were assembled and contended that the circumstances existing in the world at the present time are such as ought to exist if the Bible be true, and that the evidence that ought to exist of the early existence of the Scriptures if the Bible is true, does exist; that there is ample evidence of the authenticity of these books which contain the New Testament, upon which I contended the Old was also proved.

night I argued that that great revolution in the history of mankind which occurred 1,800 years ago, by the general consent of all men, cannot be accounted for upon any rational principle apart from the account given in the New Testament, and that is that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified by Pontius Pilate, rose from the dead, and spent a certain length of time with his friends, and then left them with a promise to return, and afterwards endowed them with power to give evidence of the truth of their testimony in the working of miracles.

All that Mr. Bradlaugh has done hitherto has been, first, to neglect my general argument, which perhaps he did not quite comprehend, and secondly, to try to divert me from it by calling my attention to a number of discrepancies in detail, which certainly I admit at the right time ought to be capable of reconciliation with the general argument, but which it is out of my power, in the rehearsal of that general argument, to notice meanwhile. He demanded that I should first prove when and by whom the book of Genesis was written, when and by whom the book of Exodus was written, when and by whom all the other books were written; but I take a more sensible plan. When I wish to cross to the other side of a river, I begin by walking on this end of the bridge; and I began to step towards the other bank by lifting my feet in 1876, and marching downwards to the first century; and we have got there, and we are there to-night, and I have to-night to call your attention to what I shall contend to be the most unanswerable evidence of the resurrection of Christ that can be produced. I refer to the case of the apostle Paul.

The apostle Paul is a man whose individuality stands out more distinctly from the dark background of antiquity than almost any man of similarly remote times, with the single exception, perhaps, of Jesus his master. We not only have his biography written clearly, concisely, and distinctly, by a fellow-voyager of his, but we have a compilation of authentic letters of Paul, written under a variety of circumstances, and dealing with a variety of matters, in which even the minute shades of his character and tendencies are visible. Mr. Bradlaugh chose to deny the authenticity of them, he did no more. I asked Mr. B. to disprove them; he said that was not his business; and as a matter of fact, he has not done it. Therefore I am entitled, in to-night's argument, to assume it as an undisputed thing that these letters of Paul are Paul's letters, being *primâ facie* evidence of themselves, until they are set aside, and I am certain Mr. Bradlaugh cannot set them aside, as will be manifest to you in the course of this evening's discussion.

Upon that basis, then, I introduce to your notice Saul of Tarsus. In what character do we first find him? We find him an enemy of the Christians. In the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we read that Stephen was slain for his testimony to the resurrection of Christ—stoned by the Jews and (58th verse), "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." We next find him not only passively endorsing or sanctioning the destruction of the professed believers in the resurrection of Christ, but we find him taking very active and energetic steps to compass that end. In the 8th chapter and the 3rd verse, "Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house and hailing men and women, committed them to prison." In Acts ix. 1, "Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogue, that if he found any of this way"—that is, believers in Christ—"whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem." That is the testimony of one who was afterwards a companion of Paul in his journeys. I will now produce Paul's own confirmation of these statements: I will give you Paul's own declarations as to his previous career. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, verse 13, he says: "Ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jew's religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it, and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Again, in 1st Timothy i. 12: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor." In Acts xxii. 3-5, you have this account delivered by Paul in an address to a very large and turbulent, but for the moment quiet, assembly of Jews assembled around the foot of the castle stairs, whom he had permission to address at the moment of his apprehension by the Roman governor of Jerusalem:—"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of

Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day; and I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women; as also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders, from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them who were there bound unto Jerusalem, to be punished."

Now, the man of whom these things are authentically declared, afterwards became one of the most energetic, indomitable, enterprising and successful apostles and a preacher and defender of the faith which he formerly destroyed. No sane man will deny that; and here is the question, How came about that great change? If Paul had been convinced by argument, I would not attach any great weight to the change, because the change in that case would merely indicate a change of his conviction, and would not be a guarantee of the correctness of his convictions. But was he changed by argument? Let us see. Surely such a man is able to give us a reasonable account of so great a change; and when he stood a prisoner before that extensive assembly of his fellow-countrymen at Jerusalem, his particular business was to explain to them how it was that he came to be changed; and I will read you his account.

Before I do so, let me remark that when you come to realise Paul's character, you will find that he was not a man that could be changed by anything short of the evidence of his senses in the particular circumstances in which he was a persecutor. He must have been a witness of the miracles of Christ, as an inhabitant of Jerusalem and a disciple of Gamaliel, a leading Pharisee; but in common with the rest of the Jews, he would see, in the crucifixion of Christ, a complete evidence of Christ's imposture, and a reason why he should refer the miracles of Christ to the supposed magical power to which they ignorantly referred them. This man, who resisted all the evidence displayed in the life of Christ while on earth, changed in the manner I have described, and the mere fact of this change is presumptive evidence that some powerful cause must have produced it. Paul himself explains the cause, and this is his account of it, in the 22nd chapter of Acts, verses 6-16: "And it came to pass," says he, "that as I made my journey (on the persecuting errand before referred to), and was come nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly their shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? and the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him; and he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and SEE THAT JUST ONE, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth, for thou shalt be his witness"—his witness: it is not a matter of opinion; it is not a matter of "religion." Mr. Bradlaugh, last night, talked of the number of the Brahmins being an evidence of the truth of their religion. I don't argue that way about this matter. I say this is no matter of religion, so-called; it was not a matter of theory which Paul was called upon to embrace. It was a matter of fact of which he was allowed to be a personal witness: the fact of the existence of Christ who had been crucified. It is, therefore, a question of evidence we have to consider; a matter of fact; a matter of logical induction from very definite premisses: "Thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast SEEN AND HEARD. And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins."

Now, from the record of that transaction, it transpires that Paul saw Christ and not merely something from which he inferred his presence. Ananias expressly speaks of his "seeing that just one." The fact appears more clearly from one or two other points to which I will direct attention in the 26th chapter of Acts, verses 15 and 16.

Paul upon this occasion gives another address upon the same subject, and, like all truthful men who are detailing a truthful matter, although he substantially tells the same things, it is not told in the same words; though if this book were a concoction or an imposture, very great care would have been taken to make the story exactly the same whenever told. "I said, Who art thou, Lord?" and he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; but rise, and stand upon thy feet, for *I have appeared unto thee* for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness to both of **THESE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN**, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." And afterwards Paul, alluding to it in the 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians, verses 3-8, in combatting an objection which had arisen in the minds of certain living at Corinth on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, says, I first preached unto you "how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all *he was seen of me also*, as of one born out of due time," that is to say his apostleship was late in its date, because strictly speaking they only could be apostles who answered to the description which you find in the 1st chapter of Acts, when they came to appoint a successor to Judas, where this is defined as the necessary qualification—(verse 21): "Of these men which have *companied with us all the time that Jesus went in and out among us*, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a *WITNESS with us of his resurrection*." As Paul was appointed after all these things, he declares of himself that he was as one born out of due time. But he had the essential qualification of having seen the Lord and thus enabled to give personal witness to the fact of his having risen. This is the strong point of his testimony: "*he was seen of me also*." Now, those of Mr. Bradlaugh's way of thinking may be disposed to laugh at this, but, remember, that one man's evidence as to what he has seen and heard is as good as another man's evidence, and better when his evidence is supported in so many collateral and powerful ways, as it is in the case of Paul. Paul's seeing Christ was not a matter of isolated curious experience. It was followed by a career of forty years' length, during which Paul's particular business was to declare these things and to apply them in a definite manner for the eternal benefit of those by whom they were received; for doing which work, recollect, he "*suffered the loss of all things*." This is a strong confirmation of his testimony of having seen Christ. His declaration in writing to the Philippians, to which I also now call your attention, is this—and judge ye whether this is the language of an impostor or an ignorant enthusiast, or a literary forger, which the author of Philippians must have been if Paul did not write it. Referring to his previous career, in Philippians iii. 4-8, he says: "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, *for whom I have suffered the loss of all things*, and do count them but dung, **THAT I MAY WIN CHRIST**."

Let me also read you his description of the general position of the apostles in the world at that time; and judge ye whether it was such a position as men of sinister aims could possibly be brought to take up. In 1 Corinthians iv. 9-13, he says, "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye (Corinthians) are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour, *we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it, being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world and are the offscouring of all things unto this day*." Now a man who was educated at Jerusalem, of a high parentage, and with splendid opening prospects

before him, who should suddenly rush into a career leading to such results, must be held to have had some rational reason for doing it. Paul's reason is rational. There is no other reason admissible in his case. Let me ask Mr. Bradlaugh to tell us what he thinks was Paul's reason, and I will then examine it. Mr. Bradlaugh cannot give a rational account of Paul's case. He can only say he has no evidence there ever was such a man, which is simply shutting the eyes to the clear beams of truth.

But the case for Paul does not rest entirely upon the facts I have rehearsed. There are other strong confirmatory elements when we come to look into it. Paul not only went before Jews and Gentiles and presented his personal testimony to the resurrection of Christ, but certain things transpired in connection with the presentation of that testimony which we shall now have to consider. We are told that "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul"—(Acts xix. 11). I submit the evidence of it: 1 Corinthians xiv. 18-19: "I thank my God, *I speak with tongues more than ye all*," says he, in writing to the Corinthians. He says this in the course of an argument tending to depreciate the importance of speaking with tongues. Let me read it to you, as it is an illustration of the great good sense that characterised this man: "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." What does he refer to when he refers to that "speaking with tongues?" You will find an answer in the second chapter of Acts, which I intended to call attention to last night; but which I was prevented from doing for want of time, but which will come in appropriately at this point of the argument. You will see by reference to that chapter that the apostolic "speaking with tongues" was not the sort of gibberish which passes current in certain holes and corners in our day for "tongues." Hear the definition of them (Acts ii. 1): "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man,"—every man of the multitude spoken of in the 5th verse: "devout men out of every nation under heaven,"—"every man heard them speak IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE." And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, "Behold, are not all these which *speak Galilæans*?" not only Galilæans, but illiterate fishermen, who knew no tongue but their native dialect—"And how hear we every man in *our own tongue, wherein we were born*? Parthians, and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, WE DO HEAR THEM SPEAK IN OUR TONGUES the wonderful works of God." Therefore this speaking with tongues in the apostolic days was no matter of gibberish; it is no matter of what is understood in our day by "unknown tongues:" the *tongues* spoken in those days were "known;" they were the spoken languages of mankind. And therefore the question to be answered is, how came illiterate men, without previous instruction, to be able in a moment to speak the current languages of mankind?" Paul says, "I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than ye all," yet he counts it as a matter of little importance, which shows how real an experience it was in the apostolic day; for men don't talk this way about a thing that is not happening. If it was real, it was miraculous; and if miraculous, we have another evidence of the truth of Paul's testimony of Christ's resurrection: for these miracles were expressly declared to be God's confirmation of the testimony of the apostles. Then beside the speaking with tongues, we have other miracles. In Acts xix. 11 we read: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." Again, Acts xvi. 25: "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God;" this is when they were made prisoners for teaching the word of God, "and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there

was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bonds were loosed." In Acts xiii. 9-12, you have the account where Paul struck with blindness a man who was opposing him before the Roman deputy. In Acts xiv. 8-10, you have a case where he cured a man who was crippled from his infancy, in consequence of which the people of the city wanted to do him and his companions the honours supposed to be due to the gods, which they declined, saying that the works done were not their works, but done by God through them in attestation of the fact that His Son was risen and was offered to all men for faith, that they might obtain forgiveness of sins and a title to another and a glorious life, which Christ is to develop upon the earth at his second coming.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts has been good enough to sketch to you what has happened on the previous two nights of this debate, but his sketch lacks one or two features which I will take the liberty of supplying. The question for discussion and the point that Mr. Roberts ought to try to prove is that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation; and in answer to a challenge from myself Mr. Roberts said that by authentic he meant really written by the persons by whom they professed to have been written, and at the times they professed to have been written, and said that there was evidence that the writings were in current circulation at the time they were produced. He has not given a particle of evidence, either on the two previous nights or to-night, in favour of any one person as the writer of any one book. He has asked me to disprove that some epistle was written by some man whom he calls Paul. His business is not to ask me to disprove it, but to prove it to you, and my business is simply to wait for his proof, and then examine it. If I know nothing whatever on the subject, that don't prove that Paul wrote the epistle: his business is either to prove them or to say nothing about them. Then he is good enough to say something about the books not being the works of impostors. He ought to have told you that I had said that I do not maintain, that I never pretended to maintain, that the Bible, as represented in the authorised English version, which Mr. Roberts tells me is what he is content to be bound by in this debate; I have never pretended that that whole book is the work of some men designedly intending an imposture. I have always pretended, and do pretend, that like many other mythic books it is an out-growth of different ages, the work of different men and at different times, full of their blunders when they blundered, full of their crimes when they were criminal, having their poetry if they were poetical, but simply expressing the men and the age out of whom it came. (A voice: ha! ha!) The gentleman who thinks that ridiculous has afforded us the weight of his testimony to the truth of the divine revelation, and I am sure it is the most valuable piece of evidence I have listened to in this debate here. And now you must do me the justice to say that our friends did not begin any of that interruption. I asked Mr. Roberts whether that could be a divine revelation which, professing to state the character of Deity, contradicted every fairly assumable attribute for Deity, and I read a number of attributes which, with one exception, were thoroughly agreed to by Mr. Roberts; viz., omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, including foreknowledge, infinity, eternity, personality—I added another—all-goodness; to that Mr. Roberts objected, not to the attribute of all-goodness, but as saying that he did not mean to bind God with the meaning of the word goodness as usually applied to man. I did not gather from him any sufficient meaning in lieu of it; that might have been simply my fault, but with that exception we were agreed. And I drew his attention, not simply to discrepancies of detail, but I drew his attention to Exodus the 32nd chapter, verses 7 to 14, where the Lord says unto Moses, "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation;" and I asked whether, in that which professed to be a revelation from an all-wise and all-powerful God, we could fairly expect any language of that kind at all. I drew his attention to verse 35, and to chapter 28, verses 1-3, and showed that by those verses God was appointing Aaron a priest at the very time He knew that Aaron was misleading His people, and that God punished the people because they did the sin which Aaron had done, whom God had appointed to be their leader; and I asked him whether this was

consistent with any notion of a revelation from God. I took him to a variety of texts: Numbers xxiii. 19; 1 Samuel xv. 29; Malachi iii. 6, which represent that God does not repent and that God does not change. I took him to the case in 2 Kings xx. 1, where He says to Hezekiah, "Thou shalt die," and afterwards, on Hezekiah praying to Him, relents, and doesn't kill Hezekiah at all, but lets him live. I took him to where He repented of having made Saul king, 1 Samuel xv. 11; and to 2 Samuel xxiv. 15-16, where God punished a people for the crime of their king, and then repented Him of the evil He was doing. I took him to Genesis vi. 6, where God repented that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart. I took him on the point of omniscience to Genesis xviii. 20-21, and pointed out to him that the story had reached God in Heaven, that He did not know whether it was true or not, that He had come down to find out; and asked him whether that was consistent with omniscience. I took him through the same story, and showed the whole trick of bargaining with Abraham as to the preservation of the people in the doomed cities. I took him to 2 Chronicles xxxii. 38, and Deuteronomy viii. 2. I took him from these to the abhorrent cases of legislation in Exodus xxi. 2-6, where it provides that a slaveowner may give to a Hebrew slave a wife, and that when the seven years of servitude are up, that if the slave have begotten children by that wife he is to leave his children behind him and go away by himself; and if he wants to remain with them, as a penalty for that he is to be made a slave for ever; and I also referred to Leviticus xxv. 44-46; and I pointed out that while these doctrines applied to the Jews, for the pagans there was a never-ending slavery: "Ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever." I took him to the war commands of Numbers xxxi. 17, and pointed out that while the tendency of all wise men to-day was towards peace, this represented a God full of blood and murder, authorising the killing of every man, of every woman who was a mother and wife, and only sanctioning the saving of women who were not wives for purposes so horrible as to shock all right-minded persons, and which are yet imagined to be legalised by God. (Hisses). If you dare not listen to your own Bible you have the fullest evidence that it is not authentic. I took him to the whole story of the fall, as depicted in Genesis, and asked him how God could be imagined as inventing a damnation-trap in which to catch the whole world. I took him to the story of the deluge, and asked him whether it was consistent with the attributes of God, as we have them, that He should convert the whole world into a slaughter-house, when He was omnipotent enough to have reformed it. I took him to the case of Jacob, the thief, the liar, and the cheat, who was loved by God either because of, or despite his rascality, and to Esau, the one who when strong forgave his mean brother, who nevertheless was hated. I took him to the case of David, in 1st Kings xi. 33, 34, 38; and xiv. 8, where he is spoken of as having kept God's statutes all the days of his life, and as never having done anything wrong; and I pointed out that he was a murderer, a traitor, a liar, a thief, an ungrateful scoundrel, betraying to death the subjects of the king who sheltered him. I asked whether this was a picture of an authentic revelation. Well, those were a few of the little discrepancies. And not one of these having been answered, Mr. Roberts says, if he had time he could, if he had time that he could melt them away one by one, but he has not tried the melting process yet: not one of them has been touched, and nearly the whole of them were put forward in my first speech on the first night. He has quoted Acts, but until he proves when the book was written, where it was written, by whom it was written, that it was current at the time to which the events it refers to relate, according to his own statement he has no right to read the book of Acts to me at all; because to say, I will prove to you that the Bible is an authentic and reliable revelation of God, simply by reading his statements, is the funniest fashion of conducting a debate I ever heard of in my life. Then Mr. Roberts says this evening, Oh! I will refer to Paul and to the resurrection, but he did not tell you that when he had quoted from Acts the night before last, about Jesus having been seen for forty days, and curiously, he did not mention the forty days: he said "for a certain time" to-night, that I quoted from the last chapter of Luke a statement utterly impossible to be reconciled with that forty days. Why didn't he touch that? Then when he deals with the case of Paul, he says Paul, as a truthful man, don't recite it in the same words. But it is not the question, Is Paul a truthful man? but "Are the Scriptures the authentic

and reliable records of divine revelation?" that is, did God, who could not make a mistake at all, send this message to humankind, or is it simply the work of men who may have blundered? Then in the discrepancies I gave I gave him the whole history of Jesus himself, born without a father, whose mother's husband had two fathers born in the lifetime of Herod and not born till after Herod's death, who was in Egypt and Judea at one and the same moment, known and not known by John at the same moment, in the grave three days and three nights, between late on Friday evening and before Saturday was over. These are the discrepancies he says he can answer at the proper time and place, but surely the time is now and the place is here. If not, then I don't understand what a debate is. I submit to you that merely to go on reading texts out of this book until the book has been disproved is a most absurd thing. What does Mr. Roberts say to-night? Oh, he says, "I began at 1876 and got back to the first century." He did nothing of the kind: he jumped from 1876 to somebody he called Clement of Rome, and whom, without proving, he quoted as a thorough authority. He lumped with him Clement of Alexandria and another, and spoke of those writings "in those days," and I ask whether that is a fashion in which proof can be conducted. We must take the Old Testament first, and show you at any rate who he pretends was the writer of each book; he must show you at any rate when he pretends each book was written. I am not using the word pretend in any unfair sense; I am only using it in the sense of the contention he has got to make out in this case. He must show you where he thinks the books were in custody; and last night he contended that the five books of Moses were in custody at Shiloh during the time of Joshua, but he gave no evidence, quoted no texts, and would not even promise that he would find them at all for me.

Mr. ROBERTS: I did promise I would.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I did not interrupt Mr. Roberts at all, and I have a splendid memory.

Mr. ROBERTS: I merely avail myself of the Parliamentary right to speak to a question of fact. I merely say I did promise, and I will fulfil my promise before the discussion is out.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: When? On which night of the debate will he fulfil his promise?

Mr. ROBERTS: Next.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: On the next night of the debate Mr. Roberts is here to show that in Shiloh, in the time of Joshua, he can prove that there were the five books kept that are called the five books of Moses. Now that is a step; the only pity is, that as he made the statement, he was not prepared with the proof of it at the time. I will show that there is not a particle of such proof existing anywhere, and it won't be enough to give loose texts from different books; we must have proof of the books, from which the texts are quoted before they can be used as any evidence against me. It is not enough to bolster up one position of a book with a declaration from another until you have verified the portion of the book from which you use the declaration.

Now, if you please, we will carry this a little further. Mr. Roberts asks, What explanation will I give of Paul's reasons. First, I know nothing about Paul; reading about Paul from the Acts of the Apostles is no evidence to me until the Acts of the Apostles are proved to me. How are they to be proved? The question is, Are they authentic? What does *authentic* mean? Were they written by some people at some time? Were they current literature at the time they profess to have been written? And when Mr. Roberts has given the evidence of that in relation to the Acts of the Apostles—and I deny that he can show the Acts of the Apostles to be in existence within one century after the time of the alleged death of Jesus, and if that be so the whole burden lies, not of disproof upon me, but of proof upon him. And curiously let us see the kind of reading you have had from the texts: you have had reading from the 22nd chapter of Acts, but what Mr. Roberts should have done was this, not simply to tell you that the language did not agree, but that there was positive contradiction of fact. In Acts ix. 7 it is said, "The men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no man;" and yet when he comes into Acts xxii. he will there find, "They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice." Now which is true? Is it true that they heard it, or that they did not hear it? Don't say that Paul made a mistake; it

is God who made a mistake if this is God's revelation to man; this is the point to deal with. If Mr. Roberts will admit that the people who have written in this book have blundered over and over again, if he will admit that there are many matters of detail entirely incorrect, if he will admit that the book is on a level with any ordinary book, I shall know with what I am dealing; but his contention is that "the Bible is the authentic and reliable record of divine revelation." Now, is it true that the people heard the voice or that they did not? is it true that they stood up or fell down? Can it be pretended that these contradictory statements are divine revelation? Then I will ask you just to consider what he says: he says one man's evidence as to what he has seen and heard is as good as another's. But we have got to get the evidence first, and we have not got it, and reading a statement from an unverified book is not evidence; and besides, one man's evidence as to what he has seen and heard is not as good as another's: it depends on the ability of the man to judge of the facts of which he gives evidence. Some men can note more accurately and state more clearly what they note; for example, suppose a man comes to you and says I made a journey across the Atlantic in the *City of Berlin*; when we were half-way across a big fish swallowed the whole ship, and I alone ultimately escaped from the belly of the fish; the man's evidence is not good, because it contradicts all experience and all probabilities, the whole story outrages all experience, and the moment a man makes such a statement you condemn it at once. And yet when Mr. Roberts comes here and says that somebody saw the invisible God, oh! that ought to be believed, and that is to be something you are to accept! The Bible says "no man hath seen God at any time." O yes, Abraham saw Him; Paul saw Jesus, who was either God or was not—I don't know which contention Mr. Roberts will make, and don't much care—what I submit is that the testimony to events which contradict all experience, the testimony to events which are alleged to be outside the range of all experience, is not testimony which you accept in the same fashion as testimony which you are entitled to examine and testimony which you are entitled to weigh. And I will ask Mr. Roberts frankly to take up the points I have dealt with. On the first night of the debate, when I read nearly the whole of those texts, all accept four, he said, Oh! six minutes is not enough to deal with those texts. I said, at any rate you might have done one of them. He told us he had gone through 144 contradictions issued by a society in America, but his business was to go through the contradictions I stated, but this has not been done. Last night not a reference, to-night not a reference; and I ask whether it is not simply a sham of a debate to allow these things to go on, and to make no effort at all to answer them now. I submit that if the book contains statements inconsistent with the character of God as omnipotent, inconsistent with the character of God as all-good, inconsistent with the character of God as omnipresent, inconsistent with the character of God as infinite and eternal, then I say that book cannot be a revelation from a Deity having such attributes; and I say it is not enough for Mr. Roberts to say disprove this or disprove that, because the whole burden of proof lies upon himself. He is the challenger in this debate; he has undertaken to prove it; it is he who should have brought his evidence here. I have not seen one particle—one atom of it yet. I don't know whether I shall during the continuance of this debate, but, at present, the whole case on the other side is utterly unproved. Mr. Roberts tells you I referred to the Buddhists and Mahomedans; but I will tell you why I referred. He talked of the spread of Christianity, and then I had a right to answer him by the spread of other religions. Oh! he says, I don't mean the spread now to-day. But in his very opening, he had referred to Christianity as existing in 1876, and I had the same right to go back through it step by step, and show what it had been, and that is what I did; and I showed that while it pretended to be founded on this book as a divine revelation, that it had been productive of murder, of wickedness, of licentiousness, of ignorance, of poverty, of tyranny, of serfdom, and of keeping down people during the whole time that it had obtained power in the world. When Mr. Roberts talks of his first century proofs, he must remember that, at the present moment, I dispute them all, and that I have not had submitted to me the evidence on which I am bound to receive them. To tell me that I am to account for Paul until Paul is proven is the most absurd nonsense. He says that Paul suffered; where is the evidence of Paul suffering? In the Acts. You are going to prove Paul from the Acts, and the Acts

from Paul. Well, if that is not turning all debate topsy-turvy, abandoning all reason, then the English language has no meaning whatever.

Well, is there any other evidence I need trouble you with? Yes; that every man spoke in different languages; and he proves that by referring to the Bible. And then he says they were ignorant men. Where is the proof that they were ignorant? How can you even identify the men at all? You have no right to open the book and quote a line from it to me until you have said that this book was written so and so, was in the custody of such and such people, at such a time. Submit to me that evidence, and let me examine it, and then, perhaps, you will be entitled to read the book. But, then, I am entitled to go through it, and to show you, that instead of being a book full of love and kindness and goodness, like every other book representing the religion of the past, it is full of the barbarities of the past, full of the cruelties of the past, full of the mischiefs of the past, and full of the ignorance of the past. I sit down saying, that up to this, the third night of the debate, there has not been an atom of attempt to prove one of the positions that lay on Mr. Roberts to prove.

THE CHAIRMAN: Allow me to say that I do think that those persons who are not prepared to calmly listen to both sides should not have come. I for my part am very desirous of hearing what each of the disputants has to say, and I am of opinion that if I listen quietly I shall be in a better position to judge at the end of the debate than I shall be if I am continually interrupted and they are interrupted too. Do please let us have quietness: restrain your feelings. I wish that neither gentleman shall have any reason to complain of the way in which he has been treated by the audience. Mr. Roberts will now occupy a quarter of an hour, and will have the option either of making a speech or putting questions to Mr. Bradlaugh, which Mr. Bradlaugh will answer categorically.

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

Mr. BRADLAUGH, do you believe that ever such a man as Saul of Tarsus existed?—I have not evidence sufficient to believe that he did exist.

Are you doubtful?—It is quite possible a man named Saul of Tarsus may have existed.

If I were to prove that the book of Acts and Paul's epistles were in circulation at the close of the first century, would you doubt then that such a man as Paul existed and took a leading part in the establishment of the Christian faith?—I think you had better give me the proof first, and then I will tell you what my opinion is on that proof.

It will make it more worth my while to produce the proof if I have some hope of doing good.—If you produce the proof I must be convinced by it, and it is no use asking me what effect it will have on me till I see it.

I ask you whether you will accept Paul's epistles as proof of Paul's existence?—I accept proof as a fair man, when the proof is produced.

I asked you last night how far back you allowed the New Testament to have existed, and I think you said you could trace it no further back than A.D. 150?—I stated that the four gospels cannot be brought to a date as early as A.D. 150.

Would you object to substitute in your answer the New Testament for "the four gospels"?—Yes, I certainly should.

Why do you fix on the year 150 for any part of the New Testament?—Because I know I can show it later than that, and I always like to be on the safe side.

What is the earliest date you can show it?—That is not my business. It is your business to show it, and I decline to give you proof which it is your business to bring.

Can you trace it before 150?—I have already said that I decline to give you proof which it is your business to bring.

Why do you fix on that year?—Because I know you cannot produce the shadow of a particle of evidence, going earlier.

Can I produce any at that time?—I don't know what you can produce, because I don't know how far your researches have extended.

I am speaking to a gentleman on the supposition that he is educated, and I am asking him how far the proof can be carried in his view of the case?—You will find the whole of the proof stated by me in my pamphlet, *When were our Gospels written?* in my discussion with B. Harris Cooper, Esq., in *Horne's Introduction to the Bible*, in *Davidson's Introduction to the New Testament*, in *Norton's Introduction*, and in other works of that class.

Then you cannot tell why you fix on 150?—Yes, I have told you: so that you sha'n't catch me on a wrong date.

You have told me generally; I ask for specific information?—And I decline to give you that which it is your duty to produce.

You can't do it, then?—Yes, I can.

Then you won't?—No; it is your business to prove your case, not mine to make it out for you.

Then I must produce it. I first produce the book itself: every book is *prima facie* evidence of itself until it is disproved.—That is not true.

It is a canon of universal criticism that a document is evidence of itself until it is disproved?—No, that is not true: the book of Mormon is not evidence until it is disproved; the tale of the sea-serpent is not evidence until it is disproved.

Then you refuse to recognise the universal principle of literary criticism?—It never has been the principle of literary criticism in relation to theological Scriptures.

Well, all I can say, of course, is that you contradict the facts.—I generally do, especially when they are not true.

Can you disprove that Paul wrote the Epistles bearing his name?—It is not my business to try until you have given me the proof.

I give you the proof—I have not heard it.

I will read it.—What are you going to read from?

"Ye see how large a letter I (Paul) have written unto you with mine own hand." (Gal. vi. 11).—What are you reading from?

I am reading from Paul's epistles.—That is the book you have got to prove.

Then I produce the book as *prima facie* evidence. Can you disprove it?—Really, that is simple nonsense. If I produce a bill signed "Robert Roberts," before I am entitled to make Robert Roberts pay, I must prove his signature.

Then I ask you, why don't you believe the evidence I produce that Paul wrote that statement?—Because I don't: the evidence is not sufficient to induce me to believe it. There have been so many forgeries in connection with apostolic writings that I am inclined to look at all of them as false until I have evidence of their verification.

What are apostolic writings?—Writings pretending to be by apostles.

Do you mean to say that those are apostolic writings that are not apostolic writings? I do not mean to say anything more than my answer conveyed.

Do you mean to say a pretended thing is a thing itself?—Everything is a thing.

"A pretended thing?"—A pretended shilling is a shilling.

Is it a real one?—The difference between a pretence and a reality is that one is sham and the other is real.

I ask you if an apostolic writing is not a real apostolic writing?—A forged apostolic writing is no more a real apostolic writing than a forged bill signed "Robert Roberts" would be a real bill signed "Robert Roberts."

I ask about a real apostolic writing?—I know nothing of any real ones.

Then what do you mean by apostolic writings?—I said "forged."

"Forged!" Then I ask again, Are forged apostolic writings real?—If you don't know the meaning of the words you have used yourself, I cannot supply you with any better.

Are forged apostolic writings real?—Forged apostolic writings are real forgeries, but are not real writings by apostles.

Then do I understand you to mean that there are no such things as real apostolic writings?—That is not my business. Show me something, and ask me whether I consider that to be so, and I will answer.

I ask you whether there are such things as real apostolic writings?—Out of the enormous mass of forgeries, I have not been able to find any.

What proof of forgery can you give me in Paul's letters or outside of them?—If you will hand me the volume of Eusebius, I will give you lots of proofs of forgeries.

I ask you about the Epistle to the Corinthians.—I have not said it is a forgery.

Then do you admit it is real?—It is not my business to do so.

Can you prove it is a forgery?—I have not said it is a forgery.

Do you believe it real?—My belief is not an atom's weight in this debate. We are not discussing "Does Mr. Bradlaugh believe the Bible to be an authentic revelation?" We are discussing "Is the Bible an authentic revelation?" and Mr. Roberts undertook to prove it. I don't believe those to be the writings of Paul, but I don't necessarily involve any allegation as to forgery about them, because it is not part of my case.

I must return to my question. I must insist upon an answer whether or no Mr. Bradlaugh believes the 1st epistle to the Corinthians to be forged or real?—I don't believe the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians to be the writing of Paul.

Then if it is not the writing of Paul, is it not a forgery?—I don't know anything about it until you give me the evidence for it, and then I will tell you my opinion on that evidence.

What is your reason for saying it is not the writing of Paul?—Because the evidence that I have examined has not brought the opinion to my mind that it is Paul's.

Have you any evidence that it is not?—That is my business, not yours; your business is to prove that Paul wrote it.

Is it not your business to take away the foundation on which I stand?—Oh! the moment you build a foundation I will knock it away quick enough.

I ask again, are you prepared to prove Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians a forgery?—I have not said it is a forgery. I have said I do not believe that to be the writing of Paul. It is not my business to express anything more than my belief at the moment.

If it be not the writing of Paul, is it not a forgery in pretending to be so?—I can give no other answer than that I don't believe the writing to be the writing of Paul, and that it is your business to make out that it is.

And my question is that if it be not the writing of Paul, is it not a forgery in pretending to be so?—If it does pretend to be the writing of Paul, and is not the writing of Paul, then it is a forgery; but my belief and the fact are two distinct matters.

Will you define the sense in which you used the term "forgery" as applicable to a literary document?—O yes; I say that where I can show that the name of an author has been used for a book that he never wrote, that if that has been used intentionally then that is a forgery; but it may have been used unintentionally: then it is not a forgery but a blunder.

Then do you mean to start the theory that somebody unintentionally wrote these letters as Paul's letters, when they were not the letters of Paul?—That is not my business.

I ask you whether that is the theory you wish to broach to-night.—I will tell you my theory in my speech.

Do you believe that Josephus, the Jewish historian, wrote, in the first century, the works which are attributed to him in our day?—I believe that the works accredited to Josephus in our day, are, with slight alterations, as Josephus left them to us.

Have you any better evidence in the case of Josephus than you have in the case of Paul?—I think yes.

Please produce it.—The business is not for me to prove the writings of Josephus, and, therefore, I decline.

Can you produce contemporary evidence of Josephus having written a work which you believe to be his?—I can produce it, only that it is no part of this debate, and therefore, I utterly decline to do it, because I have not relied on Josephus. I can produce quotations, in every age, coming through from time to time, of the writings of Josephus; but it is not my business to do it; it is no part of this debate, and I decline.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I can understand that this process of questioning and answering might be extremely interesting if we were only permitted to listen to it quietly. Mr. Bradlaugh will now have the privilege of either making a speech or questioning Mr. Roberts.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

By whom do you think the Book of Genesis was written?—By Moses.

When?—Principally while the Israelites were sojourning in the wilderness for forty years.

But about what date is that?—About 1500 years before Christ, more or less.

Can you show me any evidence that the Book of Genesis was in current circulation about 1500 years before Christ?—Yes.

Will you please give it?—I produce the book itself.

Except producing the book itself can you give any evidence that the Book of Genesis was in current circulation 1500 years before Christ?—I can give the consent of subsequent generations in an unbroken line for many centuries.

Then as you can give it in an unbroken line for many centuries, give me one in the year 1400 before Christ?—Joshua.

Give me a writing of Joshua?—I produce it.

Show it to me?—You know it.

Do you mean the Book of Joshua in the authorised version?—Yes.

Give me any evidence that Joshua wrote it?—I produce the evidence (pointing to the book).

Give me any evidence that Joshua wrote it?—Then I will read it.

Please, just give me chapter and verse as you read?—The 8th chapter of Joshua.

Please tell me the verses.—I will read them.

No; if you will tell me them I will read them: I can read them quicker.—You must allow me to read them, Mr. Bradlaugh.

No; I must read them.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bradlaugh asks Mr. Roberts to produce the passage and read it; Mr. Roberts has a right to do so. That is the fair and proper way. If he occupies a long time, then the time is lost to one gentleman as much as another, when it is questioning that is going forward.

Mr. ROBERTS: "And he (Joshua) wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel." "And afterwards," verse 34, "he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law, there is not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel."

Is that the whole of your evidence that the Book of Genesis was in existence in the time of somebody who you say wrote this Book of Joshua?—No.

Then give me the evidence, because there is not a word about Genesis here: it refers to a book about law—a copy of the law written upon stones, and it does not refer to a book written by Moses; and I want you to give me the evidence that Moses wrote a book which we now have called Genesis. This evidence is that Joshua wrote a book, and not that Moses did.—Do you deny that the law there spoken of is the law of Moses?

It is your business to prove what you said you would prove.—Then I prove it again. This is a verse I did not read before.

What verse?—The 33rd. "And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side, before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses, the servant of the Lord, had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law." Now what is that? I will refer to Deuteronomy to prove that.

But wait a moment. Your statement was—and I recall it to you—that the Book of

Genesis was written by Moses, and that you could bring evidence of that, and you said that you could bring evidence in the time of Joshua. I asked you for proof that the book was written in the time of Joshua. That you have not given me, but you read me instead a statement in the Book of Joshua—a statement that Joshua wrote a copy on the stones, and that he read it to the people. Now how is that evidence?—It is a recognition of the fact by Joshua that Moses had written a book of the law.

Where does it say so in those verses which you have just read?—It says that Joshua wrote—"According to all that is written in the book of the law," and I was proceeding to prove what that was when you interrupted me.

No, but you must prove it from Joshua. You cannot prove it from any other than Joshua until you abandon Joshua: Can you find me in the Book of Joshua a statement, that Moses wrote the book which we now have as Genesis?—I have produced it, and I have not completed my evidence.

But is there any other portion of the Book of Joshua you want to read?—Not at present.

Then I decline to allow you to read any other than the evidence you offered. Will you now give me the evidence that Joshua wrote the book from which you have just been reading?—I begin at the modern end of the line of the evidence.

No, but you will please begin where I ask you. You said you would trace it from the time, and I want you to begin by showing that Joshua wrote it.—What I said was that I relied on the Books of Moses having been written by Moses by the consent of subsequent generations in an unbroken line.

Then I want you to begin at that time.—I trace the line backwards.

But I decline to allow you. I want you to begin at the beginning, and I ask you to give me the evidence because your statement was in your speech that you would give evidence that the writings were in current circulation at the time they were produced, and I want you to show that the writing you call *Joshua* was in current circulation at the time it was produced.—The book itself is evidence of its production.

Show me the date of it.—What do you mean?

I mean the date on the book. You say there is a date on the book, and I want to see it.—I did not say there was a date on the book: I said the book was evidence of the date of its production.

What was the date of production?—1500 years before Christ.

Where do I get it?—By a calculation of the various dates involved in the narrative.

You spoke of the consent of subsequent generations.—Yes.

Give me the consent of someone at that time.—I produce Josephus, who—

But Josephus was—did not live at that time.—You must allow me to finish my answers.

Josephus is 1300 years at least later than the date I am enquiring about, and it is not fair when I ask for contemporary consent to give me Josephus, 1400 years later, and say that is evidence.—Mr. Bradlaugh you must allow me to answer your question, and you will see whether or not I give you the evidence you want: You break in upon me before I have done.

You said you could prove from Joshua that Moses wrote the book we call Genesis, and I want the evidence, not from Josephus, but from Joshua?—You want evidence from anywhere I can get it surely.—

No, I don't: I want it from the witness you call Joshua.—And I have produced it.

Then show me that the book you call *Joshua* was in existence 1300 years before Jesus.—And I first produce the book itself as evidence.

Then show me that the book was in existence.—I am about to do it, and you will not allow me.

But Josephus was 1400 years later, and I object to that. I want a witness of the date you pretend the book came.—I am going to prove it just as you would prove to me the age of Homer's writings.

But the age of Homer's writings is not the matter in debate. What you have said is that you can show the Book of Genesis in existence in the time of Joshua. You try to do that by quoting a book you call the Book of Joshua, and I want you to show me

the Book of Joshua in existence 1400 years before Jesus.—And I am about to do it, and you will not allow me.

Then try ; but not from writings 1400 years later.—If I can prove it in any way proof is proof. I produce Christ as a good witness, because—

But Christ was 1400 years later.—Mr. Bradlaugh, you ought not to interrupt my answers. If you interrupt my answers I shall decline to answer any more questions.

I will interrupt the answers if they are not answers to the question.—Then I will not answer any question, because you cannot judge till you hear my answer whether it is an answer or no.

The CHAIRMAN (to Mr. Bradlaugh) : You might have avoided this difficulty by making your question a little more definite.

I have made it very definite.

The CHAIRMAN : But there was just the possibility of mistake on Mr. Robert's part. If you say, produce me evidence from a book of that date.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : That is what I have asked for, I say, produce me evidence from the year 1400 before Christ, or about that time, that the book you call the Book of Joshua was in existence?—And I am producing the evidence, and Mr. Bradlaugh will not allow me to elaborate it.

But which is the author you are going to quote?—You won't wait to see.

The chairman has made a very fair suggestion. Can you give your evidence without quoting writers 1400 years after; yes or no?—Yes.

Which is the nearest writer to the 1400th year before Christ that you can quote?—At the very time.

Very well: now we have got it. Then quote me some writer at the very time to show that Joshua wrote the book.—Joshua.

But how can you prove that Joshua wrote it?—By evidence which you have prevented me giving. You know there are no books extant in the world except the Bible that existed at that age.

Oh! then now your answer is, there are no books extant in the world except the Bible which existed at that age?—Yes.

Then were you wrong when you said that you would give evidence that the writings were in current circulation at the time they were produced?—No: I was not wrong.

But how can you give evidence if you have only got the book itself to rely on?—The book itself is *primâ facie* evidence until it is disproved.

Do you mean to say, then, that every book in the world is *primâ facie* evidence for the truth of its contents.—Until it is disproved.

Of course. But I say, do you mean that every book in the world is *primâ facie* evidence of the truth of its contents?—It is *primâ facie* proof of its authenticity, which is another point altogether. I admit the authenticity of the Koran, but I do not believe the contents.

But wait a moment. You have said two things; first, that you would show that the Book of Genesis was written by Moses, and that it was in circulation 1500 B.C.—Yes.

Asked for your proof, you simply quote a certain text from the Book of Joshua.—I do not simply do so; I was about to do that which you will not allow me to do.

Pardon me for a moment. Have you any other evidence outside the Bible of the circulation of the books at all: yes or no?—In a general way, yes.

Give it in a general way, then, outside the Bible.—I will only refer to it in a general way, because I presume you are acquainted with the facts, and that as an honest man you will—

Give it in a general way.—I prove it by the evidence of Ptolemy Philadelphus' library.

But is Ptolemy Philadelphus within a thousand years of Joshua?—No; but the presence of the Septuagint there is evidence that logically goes far back beyond the library itself.

THE CHAIRMAN : Mr. Roberts will now speak for a quarter of an hour.

MR. ROBERTS : Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I only wish Mr. Bradlaugh

would employ the opportunity he has during his option of questioning me for 15 minutes, to put to me that host of difficulties he says I did not answer, instead of wasting the time with uncertain and impracticable issues which do not really affect the question, though apparently to the point. As he has never yet so used his opportunity of bringing home to me the alleged discrepancies and difficulties in the Scriptures, he has no right to complain of my not noticing them in the time allotted to me to maintain the affirmative; for what is the duty of any speaker who undertakes to prove the affirmative of anything but to rehearse the positive evidences on which his proposition rests? Positive evidences are far more profitable to consider than mere gaps and negations. The positive argument is more powerful to sustain a proposition than an attempt to grapple with multitudinous details of an opposing character, which are capable, with deliberation and coolness, of being harmonised with the affirmative, but which, in the short time allowed to the disputants, and in the heat of discussion, are not capable of being treated in a satisfactory manner, if the main duty of marshalling the positive evidence is to be performed. I prefer to rehearse before you the great positive evidences on which rests the proposition that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation; and Mr. Bradlaugh's business is to destroy those positive evidences if he can. He has not yet attempted to touch those evidences, and, to-night, for the second time, he has said that it is not his business to do so. He tries rather to inveigle me into the consideration of details which would conceal the general argument from view. I must simply disregard his tactics, and address myself to the important duty of the moment, and that is to make some attempt, in our day, when scepticism is creeping into every corner like a rising tide, to show reasonable minds that there are evidences that cannot, in true, calm and unbiassed process of logic be got rid of, which go to show that God spoke by Moses and the prophets to Israel, and that Jesus rose from the dead and is now in heaven, and will re-appear among men, to carry out that great programme which God has put in his hands to accomplish for the regeneration of mankind and the blessing of all the families of the earth at the appointed time, when we shall have got through the present wretched but necessary preliminary period, when men like Mr. Bradlaugh can with impunity go about and try to blast the hopes of men by attempting to destroy the only foundation of hope that is extant amongst men; for certainly if the Jewish Scriptures do not contain the elements of that hope, there is no hope, and we must be content to drift down the dreadful stream of time to the region of alluvial deposits, and to be laid among those fossils whose eternal fellowship is all that Mr. Bradlaugh can offer us as the result of a life's exertion and a life's sacrifice on behalf of the highest aims.

Pursuing that policy, then, I recall your attention to the great and unimpeachable facts connected with the apostle Paul. Not only did he personally testify for forty years, in the face of the organised and formidable opposition of Jew and Gentile, that he had seen Christ; not only did he base upon that testimony the most earnest practical and noble objects it is possible to aim at or conceive in connection with men; not only did he write to communities of the people those epistles of unexampled loftiness, density, purity and power; not only did he work miracles in the execution of his work, but there are minor practical elements in his case which, when impartially considered, will do as much as anything else, to convince sober, practical and unbiassed intellects of the truth of Paul's whole testimony for Christ. I may mention, as a singular illustration of the truth of this remark, that the late Lord Lyttelton, in his early days, stood on Mr. Bradlaugh's ground in being a sceptic, and in connection with another gentleman, he undertook to prove the fallacy of the Scriptures by an analysis of the case of Paul. With this view, he sat down to examine that case thoroughly in all its facts, with all the collateral circumstances involved in Paul's epistles, whose authenticity he confessed himself bound to admit, unless he chose to reject all established rules of evidence. In the execution of his task, he came to the very opposite conclusion to that which he intended to establish. He came to the conclusion that Paul's case was a proof of the resurrection of Christ; and he reduced to writing, in a systematic way, the whole of the considerations that had guided him to that conclusion, so that others might have the benefit. That argument is extant now, and accessible to anyone; and if examined by logical minds, men to follow the results of evidence, I am convinced it cannot fail to bring them to the same result.

A few, then, of the minor but potent elements in Paul's case are these. First, he was successful in his labours; he carried away whole districts; he turned the minds of vast masses of men, notwithstanding the opposition of the authorities and notwithstanding the fact that imprisonment and ruin stared in the face of every one who should adopt his views. This is a circumstance to which too much weight cannot be attached in the argument. The proof of the circumstance I give by reading an extract from the undisputed Acts of the Apostles, and which indeed are their own proof to any man who will calmly read them. In chapter 19 of the Acts of the Apostles, verse 23, we read: "At the same time there arose no small stir about that way:" that is, in Ephesus, 'for a certain man named Demetrius, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that *not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people*, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not," for they were afraid of his personal safety in such a turmoil. That is evidence of the fact that his preaching produced a wide-spread effect in the teeth of persecution; and as reasonable men, you have to explain that circumstance. What is the explanation? If Christ rose from the dead, if Paul worked miracles, then the circumstance is explained; but if Christ did not rise from the dead, then Paul was a madman, and could not work miracles, and how in that case are you to explain the fact that those vast multitudes went in the teeth of their dearest temporal interests for the sake of believing Paul's doctrine? There is no explanation apart from that one explanation which I stand before you to represent. There are only four suppositions possible in the case, and they are all inconsistent with the facts except one. No man will say Paul was an impostor; no man will say he was an ignorant enthusiast; no man will say that he was an earnest man deceived by others, for the incident which Paul alleged as the great turning point of his career was of a character that did not admit of the interposition of others in the way of deception. It was something that happened in the broad day-light: it was not at night; it was at noon-day, and what he saw was a light above the brightness of the sun, which is not a thing that could be done by deception. The company of officials who were with him saw it also, and were felled to the earth by the brightness of the light. Besides the light, Paul heard a voice, and here I am reminded of Mr. Bradlaugh's difficulty about the narrative on this point, to which I will address myself for a moment, as an illustration of the unreal character of the difficulties raised by Mr. Bradlaugh, and which could all of them be dissolved if there were time to address myself to them in detail. In one account it is said that those that were with Paul did not hear the voice; in another, namely, Paul's own account, it is said they did. What is the explanation of that? Is it a contradiction? It appears like it; but what is the fact? There are two senses in which the word *voice* is used: you say you hear voices in the street, though you cannot make out the words; you hear a voice if you hear a person speak to you. In the one case you hear the voice in a sense different from that in which you hear in the other. In one case, you hear without being able to make out what is said: in the other you hear the words. A man who hears the voice and hears the words hears it in both senses; and that was the fact with Paul; but in the case of Paul's attendants they only heard the sound of the voice without making out the words. Probably this was because the voice "spoke to him in the Hebrew tongue." The officers that accompanied him would probably be Romans, and they while hearing the voice, would not know what was said, and, therefore they could be said by one narrator to hear and by another not to hear without any contradiction occurring. Paul's attendants afterwards led him by the hand to Damascus, and when they arrived there, a certain man came to him named Ananias with a message from Christ. Mark this circumstance. On any other supposition than

the reality of Christ's appearance to Paul, it is inexplicable. How came Ananias to know about Paul at all? The New Testament account is that Christ appeared also to Ananias : if this be true, the explanation is obvious, and Christ's resurrection proved ; but if Christ did not appear to Ananias, how came he to know that Paul had been the subject of the incidents that happened on the way? The account is (Acts ix. 10) : " And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias ; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus ; for behold he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem ; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel ; for I will show him *how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*" That is another element in the case. Paul was to suffer by the new course to which he was introduced. If Paul had been to gain any advantage by it, it might have been suggested that he had some sinister object in his testimony ; but he gained nothing ; he realised the sufferings referred to here. Afterwards, when Paul was brought before King Agrippa, there occurred this remarkable interchange of remarks between the two. Festus, in introducing Paul's case, said (Acts xxv. 24), " King Agrippa, and all men that are present here with us, Ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him, of whom I have no certain thing to write, unto my lord. Wherefore, I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O King Agrippa, that after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him. Then Agrippa turns to the prisoner, and says, " Paul, thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth his hand, and answered for himself." And observe his compliance with the decorous customs of society, his courtesies, not at all characteristic of a self-confident and egotistical and visionary enthusiast. " I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews, especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews : wherefore, I beseech thee to hear me patiently." It is just as good as having Paul on this platform to rehearse his own case in the presence of Mr. Bradlaugh. " My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among my own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?"

MR. BRADLAUGH : There is one thing that I think I ought to do before commencing this speech, and that is personal to myself. A little while ago I disputed the ruling of the chairman. It happened to be exactly the reverse of the ruling of the chairman last night, and I thought I was right in disputing it at the moment. I now think I was wrong. I think that when you accept a chairman you ought not to challenge his decision, and I therefore tender him my apology.

I feel considerably troubled about the course this debate has taken, because, frankly, I would not have entered into it at all if I had not thought that the best that could be said for the authenticity of the Scriptures would be said, and that I could reply to it. And I hold that it is not the proper way to prove that authenticity by simply reading from the Bible and contending that that is evidence, because with reference to the New Testament, I put the challenge in a very narrow shape, because I challenged there the possibility of evidence of the four Gospels until the year A.D. 150. Now on that I am either right or wrong. The burden is on Mr. Roberts, and he ought to have been prepared, before he entered into a debate of this kind at all, to

deal with that, and what he ought to have been prepared to do would have been this had he been frank: he would have said, the old Hebrew books, I am not prepared to verify them in the same fashion, because there is in the Hebrew nation only that literature to which I can appeal: there is no literature outside it. But he then would be bound to try the books on their contents. What I complain of is this that he pretends there is evidence, which he ought to know don't exist, and that he don't answer frankly, for the purpose of avoiding the confession of it. And I will give you what seems to me the most startling evidence of that. Challenged to prove that the book of Genesis existed at what he called the era of Joshua, he read these verses—and why I wanted to read them was: I knew that they had nothing whatever to do with it, and I knew that I would read them much quicker than he did, and that it would give me the opportunity of asking further questions. There is not a particle in the 31st, 32nd, 33rd, or 34th verse which he read identified any books as written by Moses then being in existence. On the contrary, the pretence is there that Joshua wrote something upon stones, not that Moses wrote something, and not that they had then got that which Moses wrote.

Well, now we come to the only difficulty which Mr. Roberts chose to deal with. He says he could deal with all of them; why don't he? He wants me to take up the time of my speech in questioning. It is enough for me to state the objections in my speeches. I have plenty of other matters I want to deal with. I want to show that Mr. Roberts has not a ray of evidence in favour of the case he ought to maintain. But he says, Oh! the statements in the 9th of Acts and the 22nd of Acts are reconcilable, for although one says they heard a voice, and the other says they did not hear it, it does not mean that, but it means that they did hear it but did not understand it. Now I ask, If this is a divine revelation, why did not God say what He meant, instead of leaving it for Mr. Roberts 1,800 years afterwards to give the explanation? Well, Mr. Roberts says they all fell down; but Acts says No, they stood speechless. I don't know whether they did or did not; I only know that the story contradicts itself. Mr. Roberts says that Christ rose and was seen for a long period prior to his ascension. I quoted from the 24th of Luke to show you that that was impossible, and he never dared to answer it. Which statement is true? both cannot be. Let us dismiss such things as Lord Lyttelton. The Lord Lyttelton who has just died never said he was an Atheist at any time.

MR. ROBERTS: His father: they are both "late."

MR. BRADLAUGH: You should say what you mean. Now I have another allegation, and I am extremely doubtful whether the most straining of opinion can identify the views of Lord Lyttelton, as expressed in his writings—now dealing with Lord Lyttelton the father—at any time of his life, with the opinions put forward by me. But if it were so, the fact that Lord Lyttelton said one thing at one time of his life, and at some other time of his life said something else, makes nothing out whatever for the case Mr. Roberts has to prove. I will tell you what would be important: if he would put forward the evidence on which Lord Lyttelton was convinced; then that evidence might have some effect. But I have never yet found Mr. Roberts quote accurately from any things he has been dealing with, and I want precise evidence, not general statements, because the general statements, when examined, simply come into nothing at all. What is the case? O! Paul spoke. But suppose Paul did speak, how does this get rid of the objection I took to the 21st of Exodus, which gave a man the right to have a slave, to keep that slave, if he were a Jew, for seven years; if he at the end of that time had been married before he went into slavery, he was to take his wife and children with him; but if his master had given him a wife, and she had borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children were to be the master's. How can any statement about Paul make that a revelation from a good God? How can anything make the text in Deuteronomy, which says you are to kill a man who tries to entice you away from your religion—how can any statement about Paul make that a revelation from a good God? How can any statement about Paul make that a revelation from a good God which says both thy bondmen and bondmaids shall be of the heathen round about you, and they shall be your bondmen and bondmaids for ever? Nothing about Paul will make that into a good declaration. The civilisation of the world condemns it, the humanity and civilisation of to-day

reject it; and then, Mr. Roberts ventures to tell me about my scepticism, which is ruining the world—yes, my scepticism has had to fight against the slavery which this book taught—against the corruption which this religion fostered. But Mr. Roberts's business in this debate is not to attack my scepticism, but to prove that these Scriptures are an authentic Divine revelation. I am quite willing to come at another time and defend my scepticism against any representative Christian. Here I bind myself to the Bible, and when he talks about my wanting to put you amongst fossils, at any rate the fossils are better than the hell and damnation which this book teaches. But these kind of things are no arguments either on one side or another: they are simply so much talk thrown in to utterly avoid the subject. The subject we ought to deal with is this: Is there evidence of the authenticity—that is of the authorship—of these books? What is the evidence? It is not for Mr. Roberts to say to me, Can you disprove it. Because, supposing I am the most ignorant man in the world, that don't make out a case for him. My business is not to disprove. In the opening of a case on the part of the plaintiff in a court of law—because Mr. Roberts has talked about what ought to be done in a court of law—the plaintiff has to prove his case; the only duty of the defendant is to cross-examine the witnesses, and unless a *prima facie* case be made out, he is not obliged to do anything more, and that is what I say here: there is no case to go to a common sense jury. Mr. Roberts has read, in a tone of voice which may be effective from the pulpit, texts from the Bible, but he has not given a particle of evidence outside. Friends, I cannot understand that Mr. Roberts could allow one of these points, which he says he can explain, to pass unexplained for three nights, when he knows the effect they must have. I show God cruel, I show God repenting, I show God vascillating, I show God unjust to peoples and favouring kings against peoples, I show God, by the texts I have quoted, giving pardon to kings, no pardon to people, and punishing a people for the offence of their king; and if you tell me that is a revelation from an all-wise God, and a just and merciful God, then language has a different meaning in your mouth than what it has when spoken by most English people. And I object that no man, when pleading here, has any right to cast my scepticism against me; his business is to make out *his book*. Without scepticism we should still have been in the dark ages of the world, when your Bible-Church was triumphant. If it had not been for the scepticism of the Arabian and the Moor, who lit up philosophy again when your Christianity had crushed out its flame, there would have been no possibility for the reform of to-day. When your Church was in the plenitude of its might, you had a divinely-ordained tyranny, a proud and licentious clergy, and not a shadow of aspiration amongst the people. You twit me with my scepticism: what have your Churches done? Look where huge cathedrals cumbered the ground, while poor men's dwellings were miserable, and the poor had no right. God's revelation! Why didn't it rescue peoples long ago? Why didn't it give freedom to peoples long ago? Why didn't it help the people long ago? Why didn't it relieve the poor and sick long ago? Why is it that infidelity has had to battle against the tyrannies of the world when your Church has taken the side of the strong against the weak. Friends, I have nearly arrived at the exhaustion again of my time, and I have only to regret that this third night, as every other, is utterly fruitless on the question we have to discuss, because, if Mr. Roberts begins at the beginning of one epistle and reads to the end of it, until he has addressed some evidence as to the authenticity of that epistle, it is so much waste of time. We don't seem to apprehend the commonest principles of evidence in a case of this kind; and I ask you, who were against me when I began to speak—I ask you, if you think my opinions so bad, at any rate you ought to give the frankest and the best care to try to change those opinions, so that they may not influence others for wrong. I have been obliged to find throughout the whole history of the world that what you call *the Bible* has been on the side of wrong, on the side of the mighty against the people, on the side of the priest against the poor, on the side of the rich abbot and the richly-endowed cathedral and the rich King. I find the people in misery, and that those who have striven to rescue them have been assailed as sceptics during their lives, and have only been canonised when their bones have mouldered in the grave.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the threat that I addressed to you at the

beginning we are about to remit : instead of keeping you later we intend this evening to close at ten o'clock, I shall therefore be obliged to restrict each gentleman to ten minutes in their concluding speeches. Mr. Roberts will now speak.

MR. ROBERTS : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, the apostle Peter speaks of men who speak evil of things which they understand not. I am rather under the impression that we have had an exemplification of that in the speech to which you have just listened. Mr. Bradlaugh has said that fossils are better than hell-fire ; so say I. But there is an implication under that remark which is not sustained by the facts. The implication is that the Bible teaches the eternal torment with which the clergy have striven to maintain their ascendancy in all those dark ages which Mr. Bradlaugh denounces, and which I denounce equally with him.

MR. BRADLAUGH : Hear, hear.

MR. ROBERTS : The Bible is innocent of any such monstrous doctrine, as I am prepared to prove on the right occasion. He makes the Bible responsible for the cathedrals ; I should like him to try to prove that the Bible has ordered cathedrals to be built by Christians. He makes the Bible responsible for the wretched houses of the poor, and a great many other dark features which characterise the present, and more particularly the past, civilization of Europe. For these the Bible is totally irresponsible. The system of the Papacy, it is, which has given the political law to Europe during all the ages which Mr. Bradlaugh has referred to, and which in itself is a great fulfilment of prophecy and a proof of the Bible's truthfulness, as I shall show when we come to that department of the subject—I say that these things which Mr. Bradlaugh denounces, are the doings of a system that has tried to suppress the Bible in the doing of them, in order that its iniquity might not be known.

But Mr. Bradlaugh says that the Bible is responsible for a few things that I am afraid to explain. By no means ; I am not afraid to explain any of them. The things done and laws enjoined, through Moses, are legitimate enough in view of the prerogative of the lawgiver. Has God, who created man, no right to say when man shall be destroyed ? Has Queen Victoria no right to order a man to be hanged ? (No, no). Very well, have you any right as soldiers to shoot Frenchmen if they invade England ? (A voice: yes). Then upon what principle will you deny that God has the authority to kill as well as to make alive ? I own to and take the full responsibility of those statutes which are contained in the Bible: they are wise in their place and in their time, and God is a better judge of time and place than we.

Then Mr. Bradlaugh has tried to make a great point of slavery. On this I have simply to say the slavery of the Bible is not the slavery against which modern anti-slavery advocates have had to contend: the slavery of the Bible was a mere domestic servitude in which rights were recognised as attaching to those in servitude. American slavery recognised no rights ; but whatever the form of servitude might have been, I deny that any argument against the Bible could be extracted from it. Has God no right to dictate the form that domestic institutions may take ? Is He not possessed of the highest wisdom to judge in what particular circumstances particular institutions are adapted to work best for objects He may have in view in dealing with men ? If it came to detail, I would grapple with all these points: and I wish Mr. Bradlaugh would put them to me at the time he has to put questions to me: I would undertake to shoulder them all and not to stagger in the least degree in carrying the burden. They would not in the least shake faith in the Bible ; for that faith is founded on too strong reasons to be touched by the kind of objection Mr. Bradlaugh relies on, and as to my treatment of those objections, notwithstanding the tirade of Mr. Bradlaugh against my method of argument, a logical mind is able to perceive that if my argument can be sustained, my proposition is established, that the Bible is the authentic and reliable record of divine revelation. For if Christ rose from the dead, surely it will not be denied that he was the Son of God ; if he be the Son of God, surely it will not be denied that his approbation of anything is a proof that it is right, and that therefore his sanction of the writings of Moses and the prophets is a proof that they are authentic and reliable, even if there were a total absence of all other kind of evidence whatever. Is not that so ? And I use the case of Paul to show that Christ rose from the dead in the same way that I used the case of the

early Christians last night to show that he rose from the dead. And that line of argument Mr. Bradlaugh dares not attempt to meddle with. Instead of dealing with it, he piles upon me a number of little points of alleged inconsistency in the book as a whole, and in a way that I am sure cannot carry conviction to cool and dispassionate and disinterested and logical minds, although it may please and tickle the fancies of a shallow class that do not understand the bearings of evidence. I shall not be diverted from my excellent plan. On the contrary, I rather invite Mr. Bradlaugh to follow me in that plan and pull down, if he can, the house I am building. His course is an oblique one. He did not attempt to allege that the Epistles of Paul are forgeries, and he will not admit them to be true. Why won't he admit what he cannot deny? Because if these epistles were written by Paul in the first century, my argument is substantiated, and the resurrection of Christ proved. He contents himself, therefore, with saying he has no proof that Paul wrote them. Why doesn't he give us the argument that leads him to doubt that Paul wrote these epistles? He talks of the practices of a court of law: who ever heard of a counsel for the defendant who shrank from exposing the forged character of a document produced and relied upon by the other side? Therefore on the very principle of advocacy Mr. Bradlaugh has himself sketched out, he ought to do that which he has refused to do; and he cannot do it: (energetically) I defy him to do it. (Laughter). You may laugh, but it is a very serious matter—so serious that you must excuse me for being in earnest. I am so certain that Paul was a true man, that Christ rose from the dead, that I am prepared to place my neck on the block to-night, if necessary, for my faith. You may make light of it, but Christ will shortly be in the world again, to the utter consternation of those who are so easily carried away by the shallow criticisms to which we have listened to night—I had further arguments on the case of Paul, but as the chairman informs me I have only two more minutes, and as it would be impossible in that short time to develop those further arguments, I will resign my post to Mr. Bradlaugh.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts said why don't I touch the question that Christ rose from the dead. I thought I had challenged that what he had said about Christ being seen for forty days according to Acts was contradicted in Luke. I thought I had said, giving texts to him on the previous nights, and reminding him of it to-night, that the statement about Christ being three days and three nights in the grave was not true. I thought I had shown him on each of the two nights that the statements about the women who came to the tomb were self contradictory, one making it one woman, another making it two, and another making it more; and while I have mentioned these contradictions relating to the resurrection, it is simply an impertinence to say that I have not dealt with it.

Now we have a new case made. First, the Bible don't teach hell-fire; and for the purposes of this debate Mr. Roberts is governed by the authorised English version, which he agreed to accept. Mark, 9th chapter, verses 43 to 48: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." And that is repeated over and over again. Matthew xxv. 41: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew xviii. 8: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." Well, if "everlasting fire" don't mean everlasting fire, if fire that can't be quenched don't mean fire that can't be quenched, then we have got to get a new language. It cannot be said that this is wrongly translated from some other tongue, because Mr. Roberts has agreed to accept the authorised English version as authority in this debate. Then he says that the slavery of the Bible was a mere servitude, in which rights were recognised, but that the American slave laws did not recognise rights. I say that is not true. I have read with attention the decisions relating to the slave laws of America, and I say there was no portion of the slave laws of America which said that a man might beat his slave within three days of his life, and that if he lived till the third day he was not to be punished because he was his money; and I say that in Exodus xxi. 20, 21, it is provided that "if a man smite his servant

or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished, for he is his money." I say that I am not here to defend American slavery. I admitted that American slavery reduced man to the position of a chattel, I admitted that it was damnable and wicked, and I admitted that the clergy defended it on the authority of this very book. I affirm that it was under cover of this book that pious slaveholders upheld their iniquitous system. Our friend says God in His highest wisdom knew what was best. I say that it was never best for any men at any time in the world to have the right to buy people whom they might beat within three days of their lives; I say it was never right for a rich murderer to escape because he paid for the man he had murdered. I say that it never could have been right to steal a woman and then turn her adrift. I say the whole thing is as monstrous as it can be. Then I am told, I am defied to prove the epistles of Paul to be a forgery. That is not the language that a man who is bound to prove them to be true should use to his opponent. Mr. Roberts has told me about the proceedings of law courts. If I don't understand the Bible I understand the proceedings of law courts, and no man who knows me will say I don't—and I say it is a most ridiculous proposition to say that if the plaintiff had not proved any case at all, that the defendant would try to contradict the case he had proved. If a deed is put in as evidence, it is not received as evidence until that deed is verified: it is only a piece of paper to which no attention is paid until it is proved by whom it was written. It is simply a piece of paper that the clerk of the court won't read, because there is nothing in evidence about it.

Then I am told that I have led you off with silly criticisms. The wisdom of the criticisms must be judged by others by and bye. I have only followed Mr. Roberts in the course he has taken. I did not attack the general teachings of Christianity to-night until he had referred to the scepticism of myself to-night, and then it was a fair retort to the speech he had made. If he wants to confine us to a critical examination of the book, I will follow him step by step; but if he fancies that flowers of speech will do, then to the best of my ability I will try flowers of speech too. I don't pretend that we have the deep and profound mind of our friend, who pretends to see evidence where it does not exist; but we have sufficient intelligence for the ordinary affairs of life, and we want that kind of evidence put to us here. Then we are told that there is a comparison between you killing Frenchmen who invade your country, and God telling the Jews to kill Canaanites who were born in the country the Jews invaded under the direction of your merciless Deity. Mr. Roberts says you will be justified in killing Frenchmen who invade your country.

MR. ROBERTS: No, I did not.

MR. BRADLAUGH: You did.

MR. ROBERTS: No; I asked them if they believed they would be.

MR. BRADLAUGH: But you must have meant something. If it was not intended to explain the one point by an analogy to the other, then it was a mere trick of speech, which might be proper in an infidel not governed by the considerations of the Bible, as Mr. Roberts is, but which ought never to have come from his side at all. Friends, we have nearly finished. I ask, is there one of you who has had the slightest evidence given to you that Christ rose? Has there been an attempt to prove any one of the facts, any kind of evidence given of the authenticity of any one of the books? No; all we have had is a daring "I defy Mr. Bradlaugh to disprove it!" My business is not to advance a line of negative proof: my business is to examine the evidence submitted from the other side; and you have not to do with my mere opinion. My mere opinion may be correct, or it may be incorrect. I pretend to no infallibility. I am ready to examine the evidence if it be submitted to me; but unless, during the three nights of the debate to come, Mr. Roberts is prepared to advance something, he had better make an announcement that he is not prepared to do it now, but will on some other occasion. This is the proper time and place to prove that it is God's Word, and it cannot be God's Word if it be full of cruelty, crime, treachery, deceit, and murder; full of those abominations which a civilised world has set aside. I beg to propose a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: That had better be reserved till the last meeting.

Fourth Night,

TUESDAY, 20th JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

MR. GEORGE H. ST. CLAIR IN THE CHAIR.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, The order of the discussion, this evening, will be the same as last Thursday. The order of the meeting will, I trust, be kept at least as well. There was not much to complain of on that occasion; but there was a little. Some few friends found they were not able to control their feelings; and it is reasonable to suppose that having made that discovery, they have staid at home to-night. One or two friends, again, seemed desirous of taking part in the debate, and these, no doubt, have sent a challenge in the meantime, to Mr. Bradlaugh or Mr. Roberts, and they will reserve any further arguments until their own proper debate comes off. It cannot be too well understood that any interruption is a loss of time to the speakers, and a loss of time to the entire meeting, and cannot possibly result in any good. The subject for discussion is the same as before, namely, "Are the Scriptures the Authentic and Reliable Records of Divine Revelation?" Mr. Roberts will affirm that they are, and Mr. Bradlaugh will deny. I ask Mr. Roberts to resume the discussion.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Bradlaugh correctly defined the duties devolving upon the respective parties to this discussion when he said that it belonged to me to affirm that the Bible is true, and that it belonged to him to examine my evidence. Unfortunately, however, so far as the discussion has gone, Mr. Bradlaugh has not acted in accordance with that excellent definition. He has neglected entirely to examine the evidences, such as they are, which I have, so far, rehearsed in your hearing. He has not attempted to controvert the fact that there are Jews, though I should not have been very much surprised had he tried to do so. He has not attempted to controvert the fact that the existence of the Jews is required by the hypothesis of the truthfulness of the Bible. He has not controverted the fact that there is an ecclesiastical tyranny in Europe as the most prominent feature of the European system—a feature which has prevailed for many centuries, as the Bible required. He has not attempted to show that the existence of that ecclesiastical imposture is inconsistent with the position I am taking, or that it fails to sustain the argument I have founded upon it. With regard to the third proposition, he has not attempted to give us a reasonable account of the origin of Christianity, nor has he attempted to deal with the account I gave, which I endeavoured to show was thoroughly reasonable. He has not attempted to deal with the case of Paul; but he has taken the extraordinary course of denying that there ever was such a man, or, at all events, that there is evidence sufficient to justify us in believing in his existence.

When, however, he did attempt to deal with any part of the positive evidence I have rehearsed in your hearing, he has done that which he said he was not called upon to do; he has attempted to disprove my evidence. This he has done by a hurried, rather excited and somewhat disconnected recital of miscellaneous points and passages, which he rather hinted at as inconsistent with my argument, than tried to show that they actually were so.

There was one notable exception to that course of his. I produced the writings of

Paul as one of my principal and most valuable evidences. They exist, which is a great fact. I mean the existence of the epistles bearing his name is a great fact, for a reading of them would convince any unbiassed mind that they are no forgery; an unbiassed reader instinctively feels that a forger or literary inventor could not produce such writings. I produced them as a weighty element in the argument. Mr. Bradlaugh did not attempt to disprove them; he said it was not his business. He knows he cannot. When he cannot, he says it is not his business; but when he thinks he can, he tries.

But I am not content to leave the matter in that position. I was a little taken by surprise, I must confess, by Mr. Bradlaugh's tactics on this point, because it is universally conceded now, with the exception of a few of the more unscrupulous and uncritical of the unbelieving class, that Paul lived in the first century, and that Paul wrote these letters. I assumed that Mr. Bradlaugh would admit this also, and argue the case on the basis of that admission. Therefore I had not come prepared with the complete and exhaustive technical evidence which it is possible to produce in support of the fact. I would have prepared myself with the evidence if I had expected Mr. Bradlaugh would have taken the position he has taken. I have come to-night so prepared, and I shall carry the chain of evidence not only back to A.D. 150, but right straight away into the days of Paul himself in an unbroken chain—not a broken one, such as Mr. Bradlaugh says he is contented with in the case of Eusebius. In the case of Homer, Herodotus, Livy, and other ancient writers, he has to be content with a very faint and broken chain of evidence, and the principle which guides him in accepting that evidence would compel him in consistency to accept Paul even if there were only a few scattered links, instead of there being, as there is, a chain without a single link missing.

I asked him last Thursday night how far back he would allow the New Testament to have existed. He said A.D. 150. I asked him his reasons for fixing upon that date, and he declined to give me them upon the somewhat trivial plea of being afraid to furnish me with valuable information. I hope Mr. Bradlaugh will not any longer refuse to answer my question on such a ground, or he will lay himself open to the imputation that he is afraid to submit his case to the test of cross-examination. The object of all my questions is to put the position he takes to a logical test, and if he evades them, it is simply evading legitimate test, which will reflect injuriously on his advocacy. My object in asking for his reasons for admitting the existence of the New Testament as early as A.D. 150, was that I might show to him had he given those reasons, that the evidence which carried the proof back to A.D. 150 would logically carry it back to the days of the apostles. This I hope now to make manifest.

There are five witnesses to the particular date Mr. Bradlaugh speaks of, not that they fix on A.D. 150 as a hard and fast line, but their witness establishes that date beyond all question. The five witnesses which I produce are Tatianus, who was born A.D. 130, who wrote an oration to the Greeks and "The Harmony of the Four Gospels." Then there is Theophilus, of Antioch, who died A.D. 181; he wrote three books to Autolytus, in which he mentions John, and makes thirty or forty quotations from the New Testament. We then have Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, who became a Christian, and flourished in the second half of the second century. He wrote a treatise on the Resurrection; and also addressed a petition on behalf of the Christians to the Roman Emperor of the day, asking that they might be shielded from the persecution to which they were subjected. In these two publications he quotes the New Testament twenty times. There is, then, Irenæus, who was born A.D. 130, died A.D. 202. He wrote "five books against heresies," and in the course of his arguments, he mentions by name twenty-one books of the New Testament. Earlier still, we have Melito, of Sardis, who wrote a work "Extracts from the Law and the Prophets," and in which he recognises the New Testament by speaking of the Old, a distinction which did not exist until there came to be a new one, of course. Then there is Papias, of Hierapolis, who died A.D. 153, a disciple of Polycarp, who wrote five books of Commentaries, in which he distinctly mentions by name Matthew, Mark, Peter and John. All these men flourished in the middle of the second century, and gave evidence of the existence of the New Testament, certainly in A.D. 150, for they quote from it as a book commonly accepted at that time. They were separate men, living in various parts of the world, all quoting the New Testament in A.D. 150, which excludes the

notion that the New Testament only came into existence in A.D. 150; for, mind you, the argument is stronger than it appears. Athenagoras, for instance, tells the emperor, in his petition, that there was, at that time, a community acting upon the precepts of the New Testament, which he quotes. The very fact of his addressing a petition to the emperor is evidence of this; for how came such a petition to be presented, except that there had, for a long time, existed a community of Christians subject to persecution. Athenagoras, to show their inoffensive character, quotes the precepts of Christ from Matt. v., as those by which they were governed. Consider what this proves. It proves that the New Testament must have existed a long time previous to the time of Athenagoras writing; for how, otherwise, could subjection to New Testament precepts (so contrary to the natural impulses of men), have been extensively brought about?

I say, then, that the evidence that carries the New Testament back to A.D. 150, logically carries it much farther back than that. But I am not content to rest my case there, and I march, step by step, back into the very age of the apostles while they were yet alive. I produce Justin Martyr. He was born A.D. 103; he was brought up a Greek philosopher, a man of education and of considerable natural abilities. I emphasise upon this, because this man was converted to Christianity in the year A.D. 130, ten years after which, he wrote an apology to the then reigning Emperor (Antoninus Pius) on behalf of the Christians; and again in A.D. 162, to Marcus Aurelius. In both of these, he quotes extensively from the New Testament. If the New Testament was only in existence in A.D. 150, how came Justin Martyr to quote from it in A.D. 140? and if Justin Martyr quoted from it in A.D. 140, is that not evidence of its existence many years before? for how could you imagine an educated man, as Justin Martyr was, embracing Christianity A.D. 130, and quoting in A.D. 140, from books which were not current in the Christian community, at least at the time he joined them? And if they were current at the time he joined them, they must have been current many years before, for the Christians were scattered in many places, and Justin Martyr travelled among them, and had the opportunity of knowing the facts on so simple a point as this, that is, whether they had the New Testament in their possession or not; and whether, being in their possession, it was a genuine book or the production of forgers. A curious kind of forgery certainly, as anyone may see if they will read; it is a forgery impossible on the face of it. And a successful forgery, extraordinary certainly, if it were a forgery, for it is made up of letters purporting to have been addressed to communities in detail, which communities were in existence, and knew whether they had received those letters or not. But Mr. Bradlaugh says "Oh no; I don't say they are forgeries." When I ask him if they are genuine, then he says, "I have no evidence of it." This is incomprehensible. He broaches a new and extraordinary definition of forgery. I always understood that a forgery was an attempt to imitate something real and valuable; but in this case, Mr. Bradlaugh denies the value or the reality of the thing said to be forged. He will not admit the existence of real apostolic writings, though he says there is plenty of forged apostolic writings. This is an extraordinary position for anyone to take, and I must leave you to draw your own conclusions as to its meaning in this case. I have already spoken of Tatianus, who died A.D. 153. He wrote five books of commentaries, in which he distinctly mentions Matthew, Mark, Peter and John. I may say I come prepared with the names of the books and with the quotations from them, if required, wherein all these things appear. Next, I take Polycarp, who was born A.D. 80, when the apostle John was still alive. He died A.D. 157. While he lived, he wrote a letter to the Philippians. I have that letter in my possession, and with me on the platform. In that letter, Polycarp mentions three books of the New Testament expressly by name, and quotes from the New Testament fifty times. Polycarp, in the early part of his life, had the society of the apostle John, and learned from him concerning Jesus. This we learn from Irenæus, the disciple and companion of Polycarp. Earlier than Polycarp, we have Ignatius, who was born A.D. 35, a year after the crucifixion. He wrote seven epistles, in which seven epistles he quotes forty or fifty times from the New Testament, and refers once expressly to the Epistle to the Ephesians. He died A.D. 107. If the New Testament was forged in A.D. 150, how came it that Ignatius, who died A.D. 107, quoted from it at the end of the first century? His epistles were written at the close of the first

century, and in them he quotes the New Testament, which constitutes evidence not only that the New Testament existed at the time he quoted it, but that it was then recognised as a book which was a standard authority for reference among Christians. This shows a previous existence of many years. I go a step or two farther, and I take Hermas, who also flourished before A.D. 100, while John the apostle was still alive. In his work, entitled *The Shepherd*, there are at least fifty quotations from the New Testament, and we know that Irenæus, Clement, Tertullian, Origen and others, cite or refer to this work of Hermas as a writing antecedent to their days. Besides Hermas, we may take Clement, who is referred to by Paul. Clement was born A.D. 30, and died A.D. 100. He wrote a letter to the Corinthian Church, as I stated on a former evening, in which letter he expressly refers to Paul's epistle to the same community, and quotes many times from the New Testament. Then there is the testimony of Barnabas, who wrote a letter somewhere about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, to which he refers as a contemporary event; and in this letter is quoted the New Testament more than thirty times.

With regard to these witnesses, although I do not accept them as competent expositors of true Christian doctrine, yet they are competent witnesses of what existed while they were yet alive. A man may be a trustworthy witness of a fact without being accepted as a judge of the fact. For instance, scientific men may take the statement of an agricultural labourer as to the finding of a particular plant in a field, while we may reject his theory as to the nature and quality of the plant; or a country villager's evidence may be accepted to the existence of a certain custom in the village back to a certain date, without people being bound by his explanation of the meaning of that custom. We may accept the fact while we disregard the theory. So, these "Fathers," as they are called, may be taken as witnesses of what passed in their own day, as the writings of the apostles, though they may not be accepted as good judges with regard to the true nature of the doctrine of the apostles.

The evidence of the authenticity of the New Testament is so complete, that I can only account for Mr. Bradlaugh's objection to Paul's writings on one principle. There would be no difficulty about the authenticity if it were not for the apostolicity. If these writings of Paul merely ranked with those of the scholars of the day, Mr. Bradlaugh would accept the evidence of their authenticity. In fact he is bound to. There is no denial of the fact that these men whom I have quoted lived at that time. There is no denial of the fact that they wrote at that time, and that they quoted the New Testament. It would not alter the argument if it could be shown that these were not their letters, because the writings produced, even if forged, were forged in the age during which Polycarp and the others lived (as shown by the recognition of their existence by Eusebius, Irenæus, and others), and the quotations they contain from the New Testament would have the same force as showing that the New Testament existed, as if they were the production of their professed authors.

The evidence is complete. I have carried the proof right back to the age of the apostles. I have proved the New Testament to have been in existence in the first century. It is a perfect marvel that we have such an unbroken chain of evidence, for we have to remember that the Christians in their beginning were a sect everywhere spoken against, despised and trodden down, and composed principally of the poor. The wonder is that documents should have been produced among them which should be extant to the present day. It was different in the days of Eusebius. Then the protection of the State was thrown over them, and Christian documents became public documents, and Christian writers public writers under imperial patronage, as Eusebius was. Before then Christian documents were private documents, and the wonder is that they are now in existence at all. Having been proved from the beginning of their existence, I ask you to take up and apply the argument concerning Paul which I advanced the last night we were together. That argument properly belongs to to-night, and is in the same line as that previously pursued, though the evidence is stronger. With the proof of the document there is the proof of the facts, and therefore of the conclusion I sought to deduce from them.

I have referred to the internal evidence which Mr. Bradlaugh has refused to look at. Surely internal evidence should go for something. In my judgment it weighs a great deal more than any amount of external evidence that can be produced. I think I shall be able, though necessarily in a brief manner, to indicate some general

considerations on this point which will help to carry conviction as to the divinity of this book. This belongs to the second part of my general proposition—that the Scriptures besides being "authentic" are "reliable." Mr. Bradlaugh has not directed his attention to the word "reliable." He has confined himself to the word "authentic." He has limited me in the argument to the idea of authenticity. This is a mistake, for a thing may be utterly worthless and still an authentic record. I believe the Koran to be authentic, but I don't believe it to be reliable. I believe Mahomet wrote it, but I don't believe what he wrote in it. Even on the question of authenticity the Koran cannot be placed in competition with the Bible; but it is necessary, besides saying it is authentic, to show that the Bible is a reliable account of the Divine dealings with mankind; and I proceed by a few hasty thoughts to make that apparent.

I call attention to this fact that the Bible, as a whole, is in harmony with what is now found scientifically to be true, though written at a time when the whole world outside of it was wrapped in speculative fog. I refer now to two items in particular—God and man. With regard to God, the nations of the world said there must be a variety of gods, because there was a variety of power-manifestations. They saw fire and heat, and sunshine and darkness, and water and love and thunder, &c., and they argued these must be manifestations of separate deities. They, therefore, invented Jove and Venus, and Mars and Neptune, &c. A plurality of deities was believed in by almost every nation. But science has shown that all manifestations of power are referable to one common source, origin or principle, though that common origin is itself admitted to be inscrutable. The doctrine is defined as "the co-relation of forces:" that is, that all forces have their root or origin in one principle. Now, that fact the Bible taught ages before it occurred to natural thinkers. It taught that there is but one God and one universal Spirit, out of which all things have come. Did time allow, I would show this by a number of citations; but my time is drawing to a close. But there is a difference between the Bible form and the scientific form of this doctrine. Science, at least in the hands of some scientists, makes a curious application of its "co-relation" discovery, which I venture to say does not bear a favourable comparison with the Bible use of that truth. I now refer to the doctrine of the origin of the universe, as expounded by men who wish to get rid of a God, upholder of all, proprietor of all, to whom we are all responsible. They say the primal force is an unintelligent impersonal force. They won't accept a personal God. They say they cannot comprehend such an explanation. They cannot comprehend how universal power should have a personal nucleus at one central point in the heavens, as taught by the Scriptures. They cannot grasp the idea of universal power being, in its totality, One Mighty Being. They reject it because they cannot understand it. But do they give us something they do understand? Let us see. They are obliged to admit that things have had a beginning, at least upon earth. They tell us of a time when the earth was in an incandescent state, and when there was no life on it. They tell us of a time before that, when there wasn't even an incandescent world, but when its substance existed in a nebulous ethereal form, diffused throughout the universe. We follow them, and ask them what preceded the nebulous condition of substance? and whatever it was, how came it to advance to a more concrete state? If the impelling motion was due to blind, unreasoning, unsentient generation in the inert universe of vapour or gas, or whatever it was, why didn't the generation take place countless ages before, when the same force being there, the same power of development existed? Why the blind force did not develop itself millions of years before it did is not explained. It ought to have brought itself out from eternity if there was no intelligence to plan, control, check, restrain, or stimulate. What a strange account of creation we have at the hands of such a theory. Here is the 1st chapter of Genesis, written by an American, according to the philosophy which Mr. Bradlaugh represents:—

CREATION ACCORDING TO DARWIN.

- 1.—Primarily the Unknowable moved upon cosmos and evolved protoplasm.
- 2.—And protoplasm was inorganic and undifferentiated, containing all things in potential energy; and a spirit of evolution moved upon the fluid mass.
- 3.—And the Unknowable said Let atoms attract, and their contact begat light, heat and electricity.

4.—And the unconditioned differentiated atoms, each after its kind, and their combinations begat rock, air and water.

5.—And there went out a Spirit of evolution from the unconditioned, and working in protoplasm, by accretion and absorption, produced the organic cell.

6.—And cell, by nutrition, evolved primordial germ, and germ developed protogene, and protogene begat eozone, and eozone begat monad, and monad begat animalcula.

7.—And animalcula begat ephemera: then began creeping things to multiply on the face of the earth.

And so on, and so on. Is that a bit more intelligible than this?—

THE BIBLE ACCOUNT.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

If that is mysterious, I can only say it is at least not more mysterious than the Darwin mystery, and if I must choose between mysteries, I would rather have mystery with intelligence in it than mystery without intelligence. I can understand how things made a start, if there was a designing initiative to start them. I cannot understand how things could start if there was nothing to give them an organic propulsion.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: On this, the fourth night of the debate, the names of the witnesses are mentioned, and Mr. Roberts says he can quote from them, but he has carefully refrained from doing it, and I will give you the reasons in my speech why he has not done so. He says I admitted that the New Testament existed A.D. 150. But I am in the recollection of the audience, and still more in the recollection of the short-hand writer, whose notes will speak for themselves, and I am positive my answer was that not the slightest evidence could be shown of the existence of the Four Gospels before A.D. 150. I did not say that at A.D. 150 you could show the existence of the book, and if Mr. Roberts thinks I said so he has greatly misapprehended what I said. On the contrary, I took that date to be on the safe side, because I knew it was a long way on the safe side, and I cannot make out a man who has listened with reasonable attention having so entirely misunderstood the statement. Mr. Roberts has referred to Tatian, but not a word has he quoted from Tatian, because there is not a word in existence, and that is a good reason for not quoting him. And here I must ask Mr. Roberts not to use people's names as witnesses, but to quote, with chapter and verse, the phrases on which he relies as evidence. It is simple impertinence to read names to us and tell us he has got the books here when those books do not exist in the world. Mr. Roberts next quotes Theophilus. The reference to Theophilus stands in much the same position as that to Tatian, with this exception, that there is a commentary of Theophilus which is referred to as spurious. If that is evidence all I can say is that language gets very puzzling. It is alleged by Lardner that the date given to Theophilus is A.D. 181, and how that can come before A.D. 150 my arithmetic don't tell me. Next we come to Athenagoras. With reference to this writer he never mentions either Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, by name, and when any texts are quoted from him, I will undertake to quote from him that which is not in the Four Gospels at all, and which he must have derived from some other gospels, which it will be my duty to mention to you before this evening is over. We now come to Ignatius—I beg pardon, Irenæus; and the very funny way in which Mr. Roberts manages his dates is remarkable. He says "Irenæus, born A.D. 130, died A.D. 202," and therefore he brings him before A.D. 150.

Mr. ROBERTS: No.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I say yes, or I don't understand the meaning of the language Mr. Roberts uses. The books against heresies attributed to Irenæus came between A.D. 180 and A.D. 190, and cannot possibly affect the question of what took place before A.D. 150. Next we are told there is Miletus. Would Mr. Roberts name the particular works he relies upon. I don't mean the works of Christian evidence mongers 300

years after, but I mean of the works which Mileto has handed down. I defy him to do it for the simplest of all reasons. He can only quote to you by the process of using the works of writers considerably later. Then Mr. Roberts uses the name of Justin Martyr. I have taken the pains of looking up Justin Martyr, who I thought would be referred to, because I wanted to have something to say in my speech without referring to the very agreeable nonsense with which Mr. Roberts concluded. Justin Martyr is supposed to have lived from A.D. 130 to 140. Some put the date a trifle earlier and others a great deal later. Mr. Roberts says he was born A.D. 103, converted A.D. 130. Will you permit me to tell you that the whole of the dates which Mr. Roberts gives so glibly are all disputed dates—not disputed by infidels, but by religious men. There are disagreements on every one of those dates, and it is not fair and frank in a man calling witnesses to give you these as though they were undoubted dates. However I am contented to take it that Justin Martyr was converted in 130, and I will take it that his works existed in A.D. 140. Justin Martyr was a voluminous writer, but the truth of the works published in his name have since been abandoned as forgeries by Christians themselves. And then when Mr. Roberts was referring to Justin Martyr, why did he not tell you that the famous Paul, of whom he talks so much, is never once named by Justin Martyr in any one of his writings. Why did he not tell you that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as writers of gospels, are never once named by Justin Martyr in any one of his writings? Why did he not go on to tell you that Justin Martyr repeatedly uses language to show that whatever gospels he had, it was evident he did not have ours, for he talks of the father, or rather the husband of the mother of Jesus as putting up in a cave. He talks of fire kindled in Jordan at the baptism of Christ, which does not come out of the Four Gospels. He talks of Jesus whilst amongst men making works of carpentry, as ploughs and yokes, which clearly don't come out of the Four Gospels. But I won't weary you and waste your time by further referring to Justin Martyr. It is clear that whatever books Justin Martyr had, he does not mention the gospels. He does not, excepting in one passage, use the word interpreted "gospel," and that is an interpolation. He never mentions Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and the famous Paul is not mentioned from first to last.

I will pass on to the next matter Mr. Roberts mentions. He says that a forgery is an attempt to imitate, and must be an attempt to imitate some valuable document. But if that be true, in what position is Mr. Roberts placed? I have here a list of fifty or sixty writings which have been abandoned as forgeries—books published as Acts; books published as Gospels; books published as Epistles. I may have time to read the list to you, but at present I only refer to it. But if Mr. Roberts's contention is true, the existence of a false gospel of Barnabas would be evidence of an imitation of a true gospel of Barnabas; and if the contention has not that value, then it has no value at all. I ask you to remember that Justin Martyr's silence is important, because he does, in his writings, mention a revelation to John, and he mentions it in a peculiar, curious fashion, which, no doubt, you are thoroughly acquainted with, and I say the fact that Justin Martyr mentions that so distinctly shows that he could not have had others to mention, or he would have mentioned them with equal distinctness. I pass on to the next witness, Tatian. Mr. Roberts said he would quote to you from Tatian. There is not a scrap of Tatian existing except in a quotation of Eusebius, and it is utter pretence to carry you back in this fashion without explaining it to you. But what is the evidence of Tatian? It is the evidence of four gospels. If evidence at all, it is evidence against the Four Gospels we have. I have carefully compared the evidence, and I know exactly what I am saying. I say that the evidence is distinctly against the books and not in favour of them. We are told that Matthew composed his history in the Hebrew dialect. Tatian's evidence is that what existed was only in Greek, and there is no evidence of there having been any translation at all or any sort of testimony as to the way it comes to us in the fashion it has done. Again he says of Mark, that Mark being the interpreter of Peter, whatever he recorded he wrote with great accuracy, not in the order in which things were spoken or done by our Lord, for he never heard of or saw our Lord. What becomes, then, of the Four Gospels in the earlier part of the history? But it is a history composed in a fashion which precludes the possibility of the evidence of Tatian applying to it at all.

I now come to the alleged epistle of Polycarp, and I don't want to use any unduly

strong language, but when people quote gospels and epistles as though they were not open to the slightest objection at all, they are dealing in a manner that is utterly unfair, and I urge that the evidence against the authenticity of the epistle of Polycarp has to be considered by anyone of those who take these things in hand for discussion at all, and I urge that the bulk of these epistles had to be abandoned as forgeries. A great German writer says the authenticity of this epistle has been called in question by a writer whom he names. The contents of them I will deal with presently. There is no evidence of anything about when Polycarp lived, and the authorised translators tell us that of Polycarp's life little was known. The whole story of his martyrdom is spurious and forged, and when you quote him, if I admit the evidence is true, I ask what have you got about Matthew? What have you got about Mark? What have you got about Luke? or what have you got about John? Not a solitary single word, and in order to show you this, I will take one of your witnesses, Clement of Rome. Would you believe that the writers and translators of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, the Rev. Dr. Donaldson and the Rev. F. Crombie, are obliged to tell you, in their introduction, that "who the Clement was to whom the writings are ascribed cannot, with absolute certainty, be determined." Mr. Roberts places Clement at A.D. 30 or A.D. 83. But taking Clement as presented to us, what does he prove? First, I submit to you if he proves anything, it is fatal to the Bible, for whatever he quoted was not in the Bible which we have, the authorised English translation, and I will give you my evidence; but before I do so, permit me to refer to Mr. Roberts's own case. He says Clement lived A.D. 30, and this epistle was written A.D. 83. Supposing that to be true, in the second chapter we have the passage: "Every timely honour and happiness were bestowed upon you, and my beloved did eat and drink, and waxed fat and wicked." This was said of a people which Mr. Roberts says were a persecuted race. Because honour and happiness were bestowed upon them they eat and grew fat—these followers of Christ, before there were any infidels to corrupt them at all. Again, he said, "I am but the smoke of a pit." Find me that within the cover of this book! Then, I say, the book he has proved is not the book we are discussing before this audience. But Mr. Roberts has given us the evidence of the resurrection. Let his own witness talk about the resurrection. In chapter 25 he says, "Let us consider the wonderful scenes of the resurrection which take place in eastern lands." There is a certain bird that is called the phoenix. There is only one of the kind, and it lives 500 years, and when the time of dissolution draws near, that it must die, it builds a nest of frankincense and myrrh, into which it enters and dies." He then describes the process of the bird rising from its ashes, and that is the kind of nonsense to prove the Bible true. But let us see what is the evidence of Clement, and I refer Mr. Roberts now to Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History—book 3, c. 38; book 2, c. 1—and I say he will find Eusebius there speaking with the same authority of the other writings of Clement, which have since been abandoned as forgeries. How dare Mr. Roberts pretend to talk of Clement, when he produces no witnesses; for those he quoted were not witnesses; they were only people who spoke from hearsay, like Tom who heard Dick say he knew William's grandmother 50 years ago. (Hisses). You do quite right to hiss, because the evidence can only be answered in that fashion. You do well to hiss, because you show that the sharp point of the blade has been thrust right through your advocate, and that you are afraid of hearing me. You do well to hiss, because it shows that your witnesses have been turned out by judge and jury with bad characters, and we cannot indict them for perjury, because they do not exist. Now we come to Hermas and Barnabas, but it would be dealing unfairly with two such reputable witnesses to waste the end of my speech upon them, and I shall occupy the few minutes that remain to me by commenting on the commencement of Mr. Roberts's speech this evening. He said the existence of the Jews was required on the hypothesis of the truth of the Bible. So I say is the existence of Mahomedans required on the hypothesis of the truth of the Koran. So the existence of the Mormons is required in confirmation of the truth of the story of Joseph Smith. So the existence of fire-worshippers proves the truth of the founder of their story, and the existence of the followers of Confucius to the truth of his works. And so I might go all through. These are simply the verbal phrases of nonsense which have been too much used. I don't deny the Jews. I don't deny that they had sacred books. Every people have their sacred books. The

question I have discussed is, does the Bible contain an authentic revelation to man? Mr. Roberts says that I have dealt entirely with the internal evidence, and that I have not dealt with the external—that I have not dealt with the existence of an ecclesiastical tyranny. I cannot distinguish much difference in this particular between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, and the Nonconformists persecuting the Quakers in New England. Our friends of the Church of Rome as well as of the Church of England have been found in opposition to progress and education. That is why I impeach the book; that is why I impeach Rome. But it is no question of taking an ecclesiastical tyranny alone, if you tell me it is the out-growth of the book. By their fruits ye shall know whether the book is the book of truth. You tell me of a tree planted 1,800 years ago, and you tell me to come under its branches. I show you wars and murders, anathematising and persecution. I shake your rotten tree, and I say, "Look at the fruit." (Hisses.)

The CHAIRMAN: You do quite wrong to hiss, and you do quite wrong to cheer. You would do quite right to remain quiet and listen to the arguments. Mr. Roberts will now have the option of speaking for a quarter of an hour, or of questioning Mr. Bradlaugh, who will subsequently have the same opportunity.

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

Does the Koran foretel the existence of Mahomedanism at a period 3,000 years after its establishment?—I think not.

Then in what sense does the hypothesis of the Koran's truth require the existence of Mahomedanism at the end of a similar time?—At what time?

3,000 years after the writing of the Koran?—3,000 years have not elapsed since the date of Mahommed. Therefore I cannot answer the question.

Then I will change the date to 1876, and repeat my question?—If you will repeat it, I will try to answer.

In what way does the hypothesis of the truth of the Koran require that we should find Mahomedans in existence now?—The supposition may be equally devised for any religious system embraced by so many millions of people.

Does the Koran foretel that Mahomedanism should exist centuries after its production?—I cannot challenge my memory.

I must ask you to try and remember?—My copy of the Koran is at home. I will look by to-morrow night.

I have a copy here (handing the book to Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Bradlaugh sits down and turns over the book).—Go on with your questions.

No; I cannot while you are reading.—Oh, I can answer you quick enough.

Excuse me, Mr. Bradlaugh; I must wait till we have disposed of the present question. Read and I will wait.—I will, and perhaps I may find some things useful to both of us. (Turns over the book). Go on with your questions.

I must wait till you find the place.—I said I was not aware of any text capable of being so construed in the Koran, but you can go on. (Keeps turning over the leaves).

Allow me to ask you to put down the book if I am to go on?—I will answer your questions. I was going to give you a text which I think will conflict with the other book a little. I think that you will find that the Koran, chapter 24, provides for the better treatment of slaves than the Bible does in Leviticus, chapter 25. There are other things I will find if you will give me time.

That is not to the point at present. I now ask you whether you are aware that the Bible foretells the existence of the Jews till the end of time?—I am not aware of it.

Will you allow me to present you with evidence?—You have a right to do what you please. You have a right to occupy a quarter of an hour.

I now quote from the 30th chapter of Jeremiah and the 10th and 11th verses:—"Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am

with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee : *though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee*, yet will I NOT MAKE A FULL END OF THEE : but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." I ask upon that, whether the existence of the Jews does not bear out the hypothesis of that being a true prophecy?—No, because in Genesis God made an equally kind promise which He did not keep, and I have no means of estimating one more than the other.

Give me a promise He did not keep.—More than one. In Genesis chap. xii., verse 7 : "And the Lord appeared unto Abraham and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land ;" and again, Gen. chap. xiii., verse 15 : Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward. For all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." I say the Jews have not had it for ever.

So you say ; but is that a proof that they won't?—Yes it is, because it is said, "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever," and, clearly, as some years must be taken off the "ever," it cannot be fulfilled.

You said you were going to give me a case of a promise not fulfilled?—I will give you a dozen.

Let us keep to the one you have adduced at present. You think God has not fulfilled what he promised to Abraham. Is it not possible it may yet be fulfilled?—No ; because the words are, "I will give it thee for ever," &c., and if the Jews are not in existence there, it is quite clear, according to your own contention, that they have not had it for "ever."

That is to say "for ever" when they get it under the promise?—But it is said, "To thee (Abraham) will I give it." Abraham never had an inch of it.

Are you aware that he is to have it when Christ comes to establish his kingdom upon the earth?—I don't know what will happen when Christ comes.

If you are not acquainted with what will happen when Christ comes, are you in a position to speak of an unfulfilled promise?—Yes. The land was given to Abraham and his whole seed. Abraham did not get it, and several generations have not got it ; and it is clearly unfulfilled as far as they are concerned.

But if Abraham and his seed have it for ever at a future time, will not the promise be fulfilled?—No ; because it won't be 'ever' after the promise.

It will be 'ever' after its fulfilment. The 'ever' begins with its fulfilment surely?—It will be several ages short of ever.

Well, we will leave that. Do I understand you to deny that the Christians suffered persecution in the first century?—I have no evidence of the existence of persecution. I only find your own witness saying they received "honour and happiness, did eat, drink, become fat and kicked."

Do you believe that Tacitus lived and wrote in the first century?—I forget the exact date of Tacitus's writings. I have no doubt he lived and wrote about that date.

Are you aware that Gibbon admits the authenticity of the writings of Tacitus?—Gibbon was a Christian, and I am not. I have read Gibbon and I have read Tacitus. Gibbon lived 1600 years after Tacitus. You have Gibbon on your side, but Gibbon was a Christian gentleman, and I am an Atheist gentleman. I may say I don't lay particular weight on the era of Tacitus' writings. I believe it was at the close of the first century.

Do you admit he wrote?—No doubt.

Do you admit what Tacitus declares, that Nero, in order to stifle the rumours that he set Rome on fire, ascribed it to a people "called by the vulgar Christians," whom he persecuted greatly? Do you admit that was in the first century?—I don't think it was. It is not noticed by Eusebius, and he would not have circulated the turbid writings of Josephus if he had had to his hand the writings of Tacitus. That is only my opinion, and I am corroborated by knowing that our "Christian Evidence" people altered every book they could.

Do you endorse this : "The most sceptical"—What are you reading?

I will tell you when I have read it :—"The most sceptical are obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary fact, and the integrity of this passage" from Tacitus. Do you admit that Gibbon wrote that?—I do.

Do you admit Gibbon to be a first-rate authority?—It may be that Eusebius had

Tacitus to his hand. If so, it is most extraordinary that he missed that passage, if it existed, and circulated one which all intelligent men abandon as a forgery.

Supposing Gibbon says the Christians were persecuted in the first century, would you believe that they then existed?—I am inclined to think that the people whom you call persecuted Christians existed before that.

How far back would you take them?—I don't know how far back: Philo takes them back before the first century.

Do you take the name of Christ in connection with them back before that time?—At least 1,000 years before that time.

Do you mean to say that you find people called Christians before the first century?—That is not the question you asked me.

That is my question.—I don't know. I do find the name of Christ.

How came the name of Christ to be associated with the body of Christians?—I don't know.

Do you admit it has become so associated?—Yes.

And associated some time between A.D. 150 and A.D. 1?—I have no means of forming an opinion.

Then you deny this extract from Tacitus?—That is not the way of putting it. You asked me a question and I frankly answered it. You asked me the position of Tacitus. I answered by giving my reasons for what I think it was. But my reasons don't go any further than my own expression of disbelief, and don't go the length of absolute denial, but they put upon you the burden of proving it.

As a reasonable gentleman, I ask what have you reason to believe on the subject?—I find that the author Eusebius don't quote it. The whole of the early ages abounded in forgeries, and I cannot think so important a statement would have been missed.

Do you think Josephus wrote about the same time?—I should think about the same time or a little earlier.

Are you aware that Josephus quotes Tacitus?—Yes, but not for Christ, and he cannot have missed so important a corroboration. There was no need of putting the forged testimony of Josephus if the real evidence was to be found in Tacitus.

Are you aware that Josephus quotes that passage in Tacitus concerning Nero's destruction of Rome?—I am not aware that he quotes it as from Tacitus.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

Will you please find me the quotation in which Josephus speaks about Jesus?—Mr. R. (reading): "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it is lawful to call him a man, for he was a great doer of miracles."

Do you find a word there about Tacitus?—No.

What do you mean by saying Josephus quoted Tacitus?—I did not say so as to this passage.

I quite misunderstood you, then. I certainly believed you to imply that a quotation from Tacitus was to be found in Josephus. If Mr. Roberts says I misunderstood him I only want it distinctly recorded. Will you please give your authority for saying that Clement of Rome was born A.D. 30?—I have only the authority of the ancient writers.

Of whom? Name him. (Mr. Roberts turns to a book). If you are going to quote from Eusebius I will find you the chapter.—I have the Apocryphal New Testament published by Hone.

I am afraid Hone is not an ancient writer. I want an ancient writer, not one of this century.—William Hone's statements are based upon his researches into ancient manuscripts, and are to be accepted as credible.

William Hone's statement is not ancient?—He is not my only authority.

Give me your other.—I give you Milner.

Is he an ancient writer. I want an ancient writer?—He is a gentleman—Mr. B., they are all gentlemen. I am not disputing that, I want an ancient writer. He is a gentleman who conducted his investigations in the light of ancient works in the most searching manner.

That is no categorical answer to my question. The rules of this debate say that questions must be answered categorically, and to answer me by explaining who Milner is, is not categorical. I don't want modern writers, because they only base their statements upon something else. If you tell me you have only read modern writers, I can understand. Have you read the ancient authority? If you have not read the original writings, have you read translations from books such as are prepared from the original language? I don't want your "Christian Evidence" mongering works of modern times. I want the original authorities. Tell me, have you any others you have taken the pains to refer to?—Not on the question of Clement's age.

Have you in relation to Barnabas?—My answer must be the same.

Hermas, Irenæus, Miletus?—My answer must be the same in all these cases.

Justin Martyr? Do you mean to say that you have formed your judgment upon ancient matters without taking the trouble to go back to the ancient writers?—I have gone through a number of ecclesiastical histories.

What ancient ones?—Ecclesiastical histories are not ancient.

Yes, there are some?—What do you mean by "ancient?"

I am asking questions. It is your duty to answer them. I mean by "ancient" relating to the period of the writers whose names you have used.—Precisely so. I have given an answer. In some cases, I have referred to the first authorities.

Name one to whom you have referred in relation to this discussion?—I have not referred to original documents.

Nor have I, but I have been to the best translations, and I want to know if you have taken the trouble to do that. Tell me what edition of Justin Martyr you have used?—I have already observed that I have in some cases referred to the first authorities, and others I have taken second-hand on the authority of credible gentlemen.

What do you mean by "some cases?"—I cannot be more explicit.

Have you a translation of Melito?—Having said "some cases," allow me to state the cases. There is the case of Barnabas; there is the case of Hermas; there is the case of Polycarp, of Clement, of Ignatius. You had better take my general answer, in the way I put it, viz., that I have not found it necessary to refer to original authorities for well-vouched statements.

I want an honest answer, and not a general answer which avoids it?—My answer is that. In the main my information is second-hand. I have read translations of the original authorities in the cases I have mentioned.

As you have mentioned translations, is every statement of Clement true within your knowledge?—Not recollecting the whole of them, I cannot answer. I may say in brief that I refer to them merely for a question of facts. Even an idiot can speak to facts.

Is there any one you can recollect which was not true?—I think I cannot say yes.

Can you say no?—I cannot say no at the moment.

You mean to say that in the speech I made three quarters of an hour ago, although I read Clement, you do not know whether it is true or not?—You read in so hurried and incoherent a fashion that I have a difficulty in making out what you do say.

I shall not ask any more questions (Mr. Bradlaugh sits down).

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Roberts will now speak for a quarter of an hour.

Mr. ROBERTS: I said in my opening speech that I did not require the testimony of those men whom I have been compelled to produce, in order to be persuaded that the apostles wrote the New Testament at the time they professed to have done so. I think the internal evidence is so convincing that no man of clear, calm, patient, unbiassed intellect can fail, in the reading of it, to be persuaded of that fact. A good illustration of this just occurs to me. A certain sceptical gentleman some years ago, speaking with an infidel friend, said that if anybody wanted a cure for infidelity, he would be certain to find it in the reading of the Bible every day for one year. The prescriber of the advice was not consistent enough to carry it out in his own case; but

he has since done so, as the result of his attention having been called to a new, or at all events, non-orthodox interpretation of the Bible, and that gentleman is now a believer in the word of God. My anxiety is to bring to bear the argument leading to that result, to so present before you the internal characteristics of the Bible as a whole, as to show you that it is a divine book, and cannot be a human book. I can only do this in a brief form. I will lay before you examples of the Bible's uniform depreciation of human nature—a peculiarity which is characteristic of the Bible alone. We have in the 9th Psalm this enquiry made: "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" In Psalm 144 a similar question is asked and answered in this way: "Man is like to vanity: his days are like a shadow which passeth away." In the 40th chapter of Isaiah we read: "The voice said Cry; and he said, What shall I cry? *All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass.*" Isaiah ii. last verse: "*Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?*" Ezekiel xxxvi. 22nd verse: "*Not for your sakes, O house of Israel,*" that is, not for their sakes would he bring them from all the nations among whom they were scattered. "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but *for my holy name's sake*, which ye have profaned among the heathen whither ye went." In the 17th of Jeremiah, at the 5th verse, we read: "*Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm . . . but blessed is the man that putteth his trust in the Lord.*" In the 9th of Jeremiah, 23rd verse: "*Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.*"

I mean to contend upon these quotations, which are but a specimen of the universal character of the Bible, that no book, pervaded by such sentiments of depreciation towards man, could have a merely human authorship. I base this contention on the tendency of all writers, whether ancient or modern, Jew or Gentile, to glorify human nature, and boast in human achievements. All human writers, without exception, run in the line of thought illustrated in Mr. Bradlaugh's *National Reformer*, which speaks of the dignity of manhood and the greatness of human nature.

Then we have no parallel in any human writing to the constant exaltation of God as the great object of all arrangements and operations. "This people," for instance, we read, referring to the Jews, "have I formed for myself: they shall show forth all my praise." Again, consider this: 1 Cor., 1st chapter 26th verse: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; THAT NO FLESH SHOULD GLORY IN HIS PRESENCE.*" This is not a sentiment native to human nature. Human sentiment always runs in a contrary direction. Man always chooses the powerful, the great, the rich, the mighty, the noble, for the accomplishment of any schemes he may conceive, as we see in all other religions throughout the whole world in every country and in every age. If the Bible were a human production, it would be characterised by human sentiments with regard to human nature; for it is an absolutely universal characteristic of man to glory in man and to boast in his own or somebody else's wisdom, riches, glory and might. The Bible runs directly counter to human feelings and sentiments in this matter, throughout its entire contents. This is inexplicable if it is a human production: but if the Bible be the reflex of divine views communicated by the Spirit of God to the writers, there is an explanation, instant and entirely satisfactory.

Then we have the perfect modesty of all the men who took a part in the development of Bible things; that is, modesty as regards any credit for the part they performed. I will give you a few illustrations of this. In the 3rd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the 12th verse, Peter says: "Why look ye so earnestly upon us *as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?*" Is it not the tendency in human nature, acting by itself, to take the credit of any gift possessed and to glory

of it and make it the means of honour and personal consequence? No one with the history of mankind before him can deny this; but here are men who refuse the credit, as in the case recorded in the 14th of Acts: "Sirs, why do ye these things? *We also are men of like passions with you*, and preach unto you that ye should *turn from these vanities UNTO THE LIVING GOD*." Again, in the 10th of Acts and at the 25th verse we read: "And as Peter was coming in Cornelius met him" (Cornelius having sent for him by divine direction,) "and fell down at his feet and worshipped him; but Peter took him up, saying, *Stand up; I myself also am a man*." In 1st Cor. xv. 9, we find Paul saying: "For I am the least of the Apostles that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." In Exodus xvi. 8, Moses, speaking of the murmurings of the people says: "*What are we?*" Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord." In Numbers xi. 29, Moses, when told deprecatingly by Joshua that somebody else had received the Spirit, replied: "Enviest thou for my sake? *Would God all the Lord's people were prophets* and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them." In Daniel, ii. 30, Daniel, when cited before Nebuchadnezzar to explain a dream which had baffled the magicians, prefaced his explanation by these words: "As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart." Now, if Daniel had been an impostor, like all other impostors, he would have placed his own credit in the front rank; instead of that, he says the explanation he is about to give is not due to his superior wisdom, but to communication from God. That is the utterance of a true man, who knew that the information was not out of his own head, but that he had received it from external sources. If so, the divine character of what he said is proved. Then there is the case of Joseph in Gen. xii. 15, 16. Joseph was standing before Pharaoh under similar circumstances, and was called upon to explain an enigmatical dream. Pharaoh said to him: "I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, *It is not in me; GOD SHALL GIVE PHARAOH AN ANSWER OF PEACE*." Coming down to Christ himself we see the same peculiarity. What does he say concerning the miracles he wrought and the wisdom he spake? "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."—(John xiv. 10.) "I am come in my Father's name."—(John v. 43.) And again: "Of mine ownself, I can do nothing."—(John v. 30.)

Now, although this argument may not tell in an excited public meeting, yet in the calm hours of anxious thought, I am certain its full weight will be felt by those who are capable of appreciating an argument. It goes more than anything to show that the men who had to do with the transactions involved in the Scriptures and the writing of them were true men, and not such men as Mr. Bradlaugh would represent them to be; though, by the way, he has not given us his idea very distinctly. I should like to hear him define what he thinks they were. He does not consider them designing or ignorant men. Were they honest and enlightened men, then? If so, is not the Bible an authentic and reliable record of divine revelation? The circumstances in which they were concerned were of that character that the men must either have been true or knowingly and deliberately false. They were not like questions of opinion, in which a man may be mistaken without being insincere. The matters to which they stood related were matters of fact, in which the transactors of them must have known positively whether their professions were true or false. And those professions were at the very time put, in many instances, to so severe a test, as to have dispelled any mist of doubt.

Let me give a single affecting illustration in the case of Jeremiah; and, by the way, this bears upon a point which it is well to notice. Mr. Bradlaugh tauntingly asked how he was to distinguish between the false prophet and the true. I answer they may both be distinguished by a simple test. In fact, they are to be distinguished the one from the other on the very principle by which I have sought to demonstrate the divine character of the Bible. The Bible speaks uncomplimentarily of human nature; all other books speak well of it. So the true prophets went against the popular current in denouncing popular sins, while the false prophets "spoke smooth things."—(Isa. xxx. 10.) This peculiarity of the false prophets is illustrated in the following citation: Jeremiah xxiii. 16: "Thus saith the Lord of

Hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, *The Lord hath said, ye shall have peace*; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you." The disagreeable result of a true testimony is illustrated even in Jeremiah's case on the occasion when he was inclined to hold his peace. He said: "The word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me and a derision daily. Then I said, *I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name.*" The thing he said was a disagreeable thing, and brought upon him an attempt, on the part of the rulers of Jerusalem, to destroy his life; and then he makes this pathetic appeal to the princes and the people, which we find in Jeremiah xxvi. 12, and in which the truthfulness of his profession is apparent: "The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Now, therefore, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent Him of the evil that He hath pronounced against you. *As for me, behold I am in your hand; do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you.* But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: *for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.*"—(Time called.)

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts, in his first speech, said he had a large number of witnesses, and that he could read from them, chapter and verse. For I challenged him to do so—that will be in the memory of all of you. I challenged them in very explicit terms; and instead of venturing to read a line of any of them he has occupied himself by reading texts from the Bible. I went through the witnesses, and I put it to you, that although I could not possibly guess what his first speech would be, that I dealt with the majority of them there and then, and he has not ventured to pretend that any one of my statements was untrue. But the difficulty is that if mine were true, his were not accurate. He said to you, when he was talking about Tatian, Theophilus, Athenagoras and Miletus, that he had got these and would read them if Mr. Bradlaugh challenged him. Mr. Bradlaugh did challenge him, and he has not read them, and will never read them during this debate. I carefully distinguished between what he could read and what he could not. I took one writer, Clement, whom he could have read. Clement I have read not at second-hand but in a translation. If he had read Clement, as I quoted Clement, does he mean to say I did not read the passages of Clement distinctly enough for him to know their truth or falsehood? Mr. Roberts ought to have known Clement and the others, or he ought not to have challenged me to debate. Mr. Roberts says he had taken his information from reliable writers. My objection is that the mass of writers who wrote on the side of Christianity is not reliable. We may take a few men and agree with Lardner as to their credibility. I believe that Lardner writes thoroughly, earnestly, and honestly, and although I don't agree with reference to his ancient authority when Lardner's opinion is distinct and complete with regard to it, he is entitled to some respect. But when I find a man like Paley convicted of receiving information at second and third hand, and making blunders, do you think somebody ought to pass muster whose information comes at third or fourth hand? It is not reasonable; it is fencing with an empty scabbard—not fencing at all. In his last speech, Mr. Roberts says he does not need external evidence; then he should not call it. If that was the case, our friend in his first speech should not have tried it. I have only found this that my opponent has offered to advance evidence with this curious result, that all through I have always been right and we have not heard Mr. Roberts right in one instance. Take Solomon in the writer Josephus, the Proverbs in the writer Josephus. When he got Josephus, although Mr. Roberts was ready with explanations, there was not a word about Solomon or the Proverbs in the quotation. Mr. Roberts says I misapprehended him about Josephus and Tacitus, and I am bound to accept what he said; but I cannot imagine what he meant by asking me about Josephus and Tacitus. The question was what Josephus had written about Tacitus? and if it was not put with that object, then it was an attempt at bewilderment on the part of the questioner.

At present I take it he has been misinformed. He did not quote Tatian to you. He has not read a line from Tatian, and he never will. In my speech I referred him to the only authors he could get references from. If he likes he can have my books, and I think I can supply him from my own little library with such English translations as exist of every one, not only of the people whose works are supposed to be whole, but of such extracts as are supposed to be prepared not from infidel sources—for I don't go to infidel sources—but from Christian sources.

Where are we about to go in this debate? Mr. Roberts first says there is external evidence. So there is. Now quote it and see what it is worth! But he cannot even do that. And, then, again I appeal to my friends, and I appeal to Mr. Roberts, whether he thinks the way to convince me that this book is God's authentic revelation, is by quoting to me writers I am better acquainted with than he is, and who don't say a word of what he thinks they say. It might do with somebody who never debated at all, but it doesn't do with me. Now what have we? We have a statement that we must account for Christianity, and in accounting for Christianity we may be very simple. Every religion in the world is the result of growth more than of fraud. There are some few cases, but very few, in the world, in which people have been utterly fraudulent. But the truth of cases in which men make headway, are cases in which they have had strong convictions—very often believe themselves to be thoroughly in the right, and although I may think them utterly wrong, it is not an impeachment so much of their *morale* as it is of their accuracy in dealing with these things. I do not regard Johanna Southcote as I would a woman not misled by enthusiasm. It does not follow because I do not regard a book as true, therefore I regard it as a directly fraudulent manufacture. The Pantheisms of the world, the religions of the world, the superstitions of the world—call them what you will—have not been the product of special men at a special moment. They have been the outcome of special organisations, and with different types of men we obtain different types of religion. It is only some men who have never been out of some Christian Evidence volume—with a large amount of "evidence" at fourpence a volume—it is only such men who put to you the conclusion of absolute fraud and forgery, or of absolute truth. All the religions of the world have some truth in them. I don't deny there have been good Christians; but when I am to have the apostles put to me for examples of perfect modesty, and Peter, of all people, quoted as "modest Peter," I must give you an illustration of Peter's modesty. Peter to whom God had revealed, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." How does "modest Peter" then get on when his master was being despitely used? "Modest Peter" declared "I know not the man;" with an oath, "I know not the man." "But surely you were of the company," says a bystander: "Damn you, I don't know the man." That is your "modest Peter." If that was modesty, then Tatian was evidence. But let us, if you please, see what we are to do? External evidence—very inconvenient when it is to touch internal evidence. Very inconvenient! "Mr. Bradlaugh talks so quickly and incoherently." Then I will talk slowly about the internal evidence, and will remind you that this divine revelation says that John did know Jesus, and that he did not know him at one and the same moment of time; we have not been honoured with an explanation of that; nor of his own witness, Justin Martyr, saying that a fire was kindled in the river Jordan just at the moment of the baptism. He has not answered about three days happening between late on Thursday evening and before Saturday was over. He has not answered whether it was one woman, or two women, or more than two women, who went first to the grave. He has not answered the slight contradiction between Luke xxiv. and Acts i., as to 40 days Christ was said to be upon the earth after the resurrection. He has not answered any one of the mass contradictions which have been pointed out, and although I may talk quickly I talk tolerably clearly; and if he imagines the Bible to be true, I can only say I wish I quicker wit when he challenges me another time. But we have had sneers at infide and references to the *National Reformer*—not a bad journal. I did not introduce Mr. Roberts did. It is a very good journal; there is a great deal of sensible writing in it to my taste. It happens to contain in the volume for 1867 the whole of evidence which Mr. Roberts has referred to to-night, all turned down. He could get it from there. He would do right to refer to it, and it would have saved him from

some blunders. Then he talked of infidelity. What is infidelity? The world calls me infidel, and I am not ashamed. What is an infidel? If it is to be unfaithful to my views, then I am not. If it is to be unfaithful to my convictions, then I am not. If it is to be unfaithful to my country, then I am not. If it is to be unfaithful to the redemption of the human race, then I am not. If it consists in disbelieving that God made a damnation trap to catch all the human race in, then I am an infidel. I have used no hard words against Mr. Roberts. The word infidel came several times from him. I am content to argue out this question without the slightest resort to verbal retaliation. But I carry two swords and it depends upon those who fight me which one I fight with. I am ready to fence with the rapier, and I can handle the two-handed broad-sword too, and if wielding the two-handed weapon is necessary, I wield it. At the last moment, before I sit down, I remind Mr. Roberts that he professed to have upon the platform the writings of Tatian, Theophilus and others. He has not quoted them, and cannot quote them, and never will quote them throughout this discussion.

Mr. ROBERTS: It suits Mr. Bradlaugh's purpose to make these statements, but it would not suit my purpose to do what he challenges me to do, because—and he knows that well—in pursuing these unimportant enquiries, I would be prevented from doing other things which I am more particularly intent upon doing, and which are of far more consequence, and that is the exhibition before you of positive evidences which establish my proposition. Nevertheless, I affirm that I have produced the authorities he asks for. They are on the platform now, and if Mr. Bradlaugh will consent to the appointment of a committee of gentlemen, they will investigate the truth of my statement

Mr. BRADLAUGH (pointing to the audience): Here is the committee.

Mr. ROBERTS: Meanwhile I shall do my part, and that part is to prove my case. It is no way of proving the case to combat difficulties in detail. Nevertheless I am prepared to combat all these difficulties. Let Mr. Bradlaugh give me the opportunity by accepting a challenge for another six nights, in which he will undertake to affirm that the Bible is a forgery, or a mass of sincere nonsense, or whatever else he likes to affirm it to be. In such a discussion I would be free to follow him in all his arguments. Meanwhile it is his part to follow me. I have to deal with positive evidence, and my dealing with it prevents me doing all he would like me to do.

Before I proceed further, I will fulfil the promise I made the last time we were together, that I would give evidence of the existence of the law of Moses at Shiloh for a period of centuries. The process of proof consists in reading certain texts out of the Bible. Mr. Bradlaugh does not like so much Bible reading. I can only say that more weight attaches to the contents of the Bible itself than to the ephemeral, worthless sayings of contemporary witnesses to the fact of the Bible's existence. The first I shall quote are the directions of Moses to the priests (Deuteronomy xxxi. 9), "And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel." In the 25th verse of the same chapter, Moses gave these directions: "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Not "in the ark," as Mr. Bradlaugh suggested the other night, making it an objection that the place would not be large enough; but near it—by the side of it, in a manner we should understand if we had an exact knowledge of its surroundings. Then we have the information that the ark followed Joshua and the Israelites. Joshua 3rd chap., 17th verse:—"And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan." In the 18th chapter of Joshua and the 1st verse we have:—"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at SHILOH, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there." The tabernacle of the congregation included all that constituted it, and one of those items was the ark and the law written by Moses. We find the tabernacle still at Shiloh in the days of Samuel (1 Sam. i. 3; iii. 15-21; iv. 4), which was at least four centuries after it was set up by Joshua. I now proceed to show that the law was in the custody of the priests, and that it was their duty to teach it. In the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy, 10th verse, we read: "The Levites shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel

thy law; they shall put incense before thee and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar." In the reign of Jehoshaphat, we read (2 Chron. xvii. 8) that he sent Levites to teach in the cities of Judah. "And they taught in Judah, and *had the book of the law of the Lord with them*, and went about through all the cities of Judah, and taught the people." Again (Mal. ii. 7), "The priests' lips should keep knowledge, and they should *seek the law at his mouth*." The conclusion deducible from these promises is that the priests had the law in their possession at Shiloh. I don't attach any importance to the point; but having promised to prove it, I have fulfilled my promise, and must now proceed to the further illustration of the argument which it is my duty to unfold.

Before I do so, I would notice the statement of Mr. Bradlaugh, that superstitions and religion—which he seems to regard as interchangeable terms—are the outgrowth of ages, the result of climate, and of natural peculiarities. He says that religion is not the product of particular men, or of particular circumstances. That may be true with regard to superstitions, which are not worth discussing, but it is not true with regard to the religion of the Bible. The religion of the Bible is, in a secondary sense of course, the work of particular men, and the offspring of particular circumstances of the most definite character. It is upon this, in fact, that I rely, as affording one of the most conclusive evidences of its truthfulness and divinity. It is very easy to talk of the "outgrowth of ages," but this will carry no weight with those who are acquainted with the facts of the case. My argument is that there is a method in the growth of Bible religion which, when critically investigated, will show that it was a designed affair, and not an accidental development of superstitious or any other kind of sentiment. The work of Moses in Egypt and the wilderness, for forty years with the Jews; the life and sayings of the prophets that arose in Israel; the appearance and doings of Christ and his apostles in the beginning of the Christian era, are all matters of a definite, palpable, and historic character, connected with statements of fact which, if sustained, prove the divinity of Bible religion beyond question: and the writings produced by all these men, giving an account of their proceedings, are also matters of palpable evidence; and my contention is that an examination of all these things in connection with the effects which are now visible in the world before our eyes, in true process of logic, will yield the result that the religion of the Bible is not like the religion of the Brahmin or any other superstition of unenlightened ages or nations, but is directly due to the initiative of Almighty wisdom, and therefore a coherent, and rational, and elevating, and glorious system of truth, which has already, despite of Mr. Bradlaugh's declaration to the contrary, immensely benefited the world, and given us a far higher civilisation than any other system is capable of doing, and which, in the hands of God, like the path of the just, will yet shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day; for the world has not seen the last of the work of God on earth. The Bible informs us that Christ will re-appear and sweep away all the political nuisances which Mr. Bradlaugh tries in vain to reform, and establish a perfect system of government in the autocratic, infallible, and omnipotent despotism which Christ will give to the world. This, and not Republicanism, is the destined cure for the evils under which the world groans.

The incidents connected with the development of the work of Christ upon earth, to which Mr. Bradlaugh alluded, in my judgment, tell the other way from Mr. Bradlaugh's construction of them. I could not understand his logic about Peter. It seems to me that Peter's denial of Christ constitutes the greatest possible proof that Peter afterwards had good reason for preaching his resurrection. Not only so, but it is a positive evidence of the genuineness of the narrative. How came it to be recorded that Peter denied his Master? The very fact that we should have so distinct a record of Peter's denial of his Lord is a proof that the record is a Divine work; for if Christianity had been a human movement, the writers on its behalf would carefully have suppressed such a fact; and we have, in the very fact that such a man should be chosen as the principal apostle, another evidence of the Divine work; for men devising such a work would not have placed in the forefront the man who had disgraced himself most, but because there is a God, and because He so works that there is no room for human boasting, Peter, who had so humbled himself, was placed in a position where another man might have been uplifted. God's authority and God's honour are placed in the forefront, when the work is in the hands of a man who has

everything to be personally ashamed of and nothing to boast of. Therefore that Peter, the leader of the apostles, should be recorded as having denied Christ, to my mind, leads to an exactly opposite conclusion to that which Mr. Bradlaugh extracts from it. It is a peculiarity we find in other cases; for not only was Peter, who denied Christ, chosen as the mouthpiece of the apostles, but Paul who persecuted the Church, was used as the most influential and successful agent in the dissemination of the religion of Christ throughout the world. Mr. Bradlaugh is obliged to admit that the Christians were an extensive community at the end of the first century, and that they were persecuted for the name of Christ which they professed. This is established by the letter of Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, and however he may try to obscure the bearing of the fact, here comes a problem which Mr. Bradlaugh says he is not bound to explain. It is a problem, the historic reality of which rests upon unquestionable grounds. The evidence I produce is not Justin Martyr, nor any of those other men with whose writings he is so particularly familiar, and who, in my judgment, are trashy writers. I rely upon historic facts, which Mr. Bradlaugh cannot overturn, and which his class have never been able to explain in harmony with their theory of Christ's resurrection being a myth. We know that men will not sacrifice everything and go to prison and death for a myth; but men did this for Christ, and Christ was commended to them on personally attested and solid facts. Paul said, "I preach unto you Christ. I have seen him. I give proof of his working with me in these signs and wonders, and my reason for telling you of him is that he is coming back again, and to you personally if you believe in him and obey him." If that is accepted, there is a reasonable explanation of the circumstance that vast crowds believed and submitted to disadvantage for their belief. But Mr. Bradlaugh says there never was a Paul. I call upon him to explain how it comes to pass that the vast community, whose existence he cannot historically deny, came into being without a Paul; and how that community, in all the ages of its existence, came to believe in Paul? It is playing with the subject to go recklessly in the face of manifest truth. The New Testament explanation is a rational explanation. There is no other rational explanation. It shows the straits of unbelievers that Mr. Bradlaugh should have to suggest that the New Testament was a forgery, written A.D. 150. It cannot be. How could it be? There were then large communities who would have been witnesses to the imposition. How could they, in various parts of the world, have been brought for the first time to accept as Paul's letters documents professing to have been written a hundred years before, but of which they had never heard anything till then for the first time? It is utterly contrary to all reason.

I have but a minute and a half, and I conclude by saying that the general character of the gospel teaching of Christ is of itself evidence of its divinity. For what is it? That by submitting to present denial in a variety of ways, without any hope of compensation in this present life, we may afterwards attain to a higher benefit which nobody can confer but God. Would any man have invented a doctrine like that? Would any man have deferred the hope of advantage to a remote and subsequent time as the benefit of present sacrifice? We have only to examine the whole range of human philosophy to see how utterly non-human such a system is.—(Time called.)

MR. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts is good enough to tell you that I am extremely familiar with the early fathers. I am obliged to him for that admission. I wish I could return the compliment. He says they are "trashy," but he did not say so when he opened his first speech.

MR. ROBERTS: I did.

MR. BRADLAUGH: You did not. You said you had them, and I challenged you to read them off one after the other as if they were really good evidences. I say either you had not read anything whatever of the writings which you attribute to Tatian, to Theophilus, to Athenagoras, to Miletus, to Justin Martyr, and, in that case, you ought not to have mentioned them, or you represented them to this audience, knowing they did not say what you pretended they did. That is the plain and simple issue. You have said they gave evidence which an idiot could give. I admit that, but they are not evidence for me. It is you who call idiotic witnesses. And now I am told I don't give you texts. Why the complaint has been that I gave so many texts. My familiarity with the fathers should have been anticipated, or I should not have

deserved to have come to a debate of this kind. But now that I am familiar with them, they are trash. I agree they are trash, but they are your best evidence—your only evidence. If Mr. Roberts was not prepared to produce the writings of these fathers he should not have used their names. He says he cannot follow me. I took up everyone of them, one after another, and simply knocked each one of them to pieces. I think that was following them pretty closely. He says he cannot understand my logic about Peter, if the stories were forged. He knows I don't pretend that the whole of the stories were forged. I have said that I consider the Christian myths have grown like other myths, and Mr. Roberts has not refuted the assertion. At the close of the first century Christians existed, I admit, to a large extent; but at the close of the 19th century more Mormons exist than there were Christians at the close of the first century. What does that prove? By my friend's argument it proves Mormonism. But in that case he will say that the men were foolish who built up the Mormon system, and that the success of Mormonism is no proof that the Bible is not true. I account for Christianity in the same way; I account for sun worship in the same way, and for the worship of the general forces of the world, and for the entire myths and superstitions which embody themselves under the names of different religions throughout the world. The clear and precise duty of Mr. Roberts in this debate was to have steered clear of external evidences, and if he thought a public audience was not the proper place to have tested Mileto, Tatian, Theophilus, &c., he should not have brought them before you at all, and should not have come before a public excited audience, but challenged me to a written debate, where there can be no excitement. Does he expect to become more familiar with these witnesses, because of my familiarity with them? He says they are trash. He says they are idiotic, and none but an idiot would give that kind of evidence.

Then we have now an attempt in words but not in truth to perform a promise which Mr. Roberts undertook, namely to show that the Pentateuch was in a place called Shiloh in the time of Joshua. That was the proposition which Mr. Roberts undertook to prove. He has quoted to you some texts saying that Moses wrote the law, but he has not identified the law with those five books at all, though much of the five books certainly was not law, and much of the five books could not by possibility have been written by Moses. He tried to trick the question about the Pentateuch being in the ark, and he jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire by saying the Pentateuch was not put into the ark, but in a place beside it. If the Pentateuch was not in the ark, what was the good of tracing the ark? If the Pentateuch was in place beside the ark we have nothing at all to do with the ark. Then he says as evidence that the Pentateuch was in the ark, or near to it, or by the side of it, and that a number of things mentioned in the law ought to be there. No doubt it ought to be if God revealed it; it would have been there, if God ordered it to be put there, but it is not there. For a long while it was not known to exist, and in the 2nd of Kings 22nd chap. and 8th verse, we read about somebody finding it. We learn from Eusebius that, in the captivity of the people under Nebuchadnezzar, the Scriptures were destroyed, and God inspired Ezra to write them afresh. I want external evidence; Mr. Roberts says it is trash, yet he brought it. You cannot have external evidence except you read it. You say you want internal evidence; yet if I quote the immorality of the book, you pass that by. If I refer to flat contradictions in the book, oh, Mr. Bradlaugh is incoherent. You spin the Acts of the Apostles by the yard, and then say Mr. Bradlaugh is to disprove it. A debate of this kind might have been useful, but if I had known that my opponent knew no more of the common rudiments of the case than he has shown, I should have refused his challenge. I understood he was the representative of a respectable set of men. Some of those men I have come in contact with in America and England, and I have found to be honest men. I am not going to say hard things of them. I don't find idiots and shallow pates in those who have disagreed with me. My life has taught me that there are men not more shallow than myself (though I may not agree with them), and I have learned that the worst shallowness is to profess to be acquainted with learned authorities, relying upon the ignorance of untaught men who have taken the pains to know every scrap you can bring. Four nights of this debate have gone. If aught of proof has been given that this book is God's Divine message to man, I confess I have not heard it. I have only heard the speeches

of a man who varies and twists, and shifts and turns, and then, with all his evidence upon the platform—here where he might have read it to you, where he said he would read it to you if challenged to do it—says he won't take up good time with doing so, or that he hasn't time to do it. It was not true; it was not honest; it was not fair. He said he would and did not, because it would only have proved he was ignorant of the subject. Friends, is this the way to prove God's truth? Then he sneers at Republicanism. Was that meant as a sneer to me? I am not ashamed of my Republicanism, and if I only wanted reasons to be republican, it would be when I found an ordained king like David, "a man who kept God's commandments and walked in the way that was right in His eyes," trampling on His people, robbing His people, murdering and betraying His people, ruining is people. I say that is enough to make any man republican. You tell me republicanism won't succeed. I don't know the relevancy it has to the argument, but I do place it against the lustful, lying, cowardly Brunswicks, and the wicked and lustful Bourbons. I place it against kings living upon the people—and against a sham of a book which sanctions such a system, without which it could not otherwise be defended. I have nearly done. I know you have men who could better plead in this cause than myself, but at any rate you have one here who has never made fight against what he conceives to be true, and never degraded the platform by manufacturing an argument for the purpose of defeating an opponent.

The CHAIRMAN: The discussion will be continued to-morrow evening at the same hour.

Fifth Night,

WEDNESDAY, 21st JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

THE CHAIR WAS OCCUPIED BY MR. GEORGE H. ST. CLAIR

The CHAIRMAN : You will be familiar by this time with the order of discussion, which is the same each evening. Last night, I think we were less interrupted than on the previous occasion, and I trust, in this respect, you will apply the Christian exhortation, and go on to perfection. I have the pleasure to ask Mr. Roberts to open on the affirmative side.

MR. ROBERTS : Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.—Last night Mr. Bradlaugh said some rather hard things. They did not hurt me, however : firstly, because I am accustomed to such things ; secondly, because, they were not true ; and thirdly, because I rather think they indicate, on the part of Mr. Bradlaugh, a conscious weakness in the argument. But there is one thing Mr. Bradlaugh said to which I feel called upon to make allusion, lest my silence should be misconstrued. I refer to his denial of the statement I made at the beginning of last night's meeting—that I was prepared with chapter and verse to all the authors whose names I mentioned as contemporary witnesses of the existence of the New Testament, at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century. He denied that I had these evidences or had access to these writers. I, therefore, produce them, one by one, to the chairman ; and I ask the chairman as a scholar and a gentleman—

MR. BRADLAUGH : I object.

MR. ROBERTS : As a scholar and a gentleman, I ask him to say whether or not these books produced justify my assertion, and constitute the proof which I allege. The chairman shall act as umpire, on a matter of fact like this, affecting, as it does, the veracity of the speaker. I produce, first, the seven epistles of Ignatius—the very epistles themselves, and not extracts from them by other writers. I produce the epistle of Barnabas. I produce the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians. I produce the epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians. They are all bound together with those other writings which constitute the apocryphal New Testament. Next, I produce *Milner's Church History*, which was also on the platform last night, in which Milner quotes largely from all these men. I next produce Reid's edition of *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, in which also are extensive allusions, particularly in Reid's footnotes, to those writers. I finally produce a compilation by Dr. Brewer, which brings the entire mass of the evidence to a focus, so to speak.

There is only one hypothesis on which I can imagine Mr. Bradlaugh can attempt to justify his assertion, or upon which I can understand it. He may have meant that I did not have in my possession the original books written by these men, that is, the actual manuscripts—the actual parchment on which they wrote. I never said I had. I don't suppose they are in existence, but this is no barrier to their reception. Mr. Bradlaugh has produced books. What if I said he did not produce them because he could not produce the actual caligraphic productions of the writers? He would say he had copies, which would be an answer. I claim equally the reception and use for the present argument of those books which I have produced. I have made no profession of learning in the matter. If there has been any profession of learning in the matter it has been on the other side of the platform entirely. The works I have alluded to, are such as are accessible to illiterate persons. Nevertheless, I contend

they are conclusive evidence on the question as to whether or not the New Testament existed in the first century. My argument is that the New Testament must have existed then or these writers could not have quoted from it. And the force of that argument is not weakened by the fact that some of the writers believed in the Phoenix or any other nonsense. Nor is it affected by the suggestion that these letters of Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, &c., may be forgeries: for even if forgeries, their existence is traceable to the first century, and their evidence of the existence of the New Testament at that time is all the same.

Having alluded to these matters which, I am sorry to have taken up so much of my half hour with, I propose returning to my affirmative argument, and to show that the history of the Jewish nation, particularly as involving the character and career of Moses, cannot be explained on the Free-thinkers' hypothesis, but is, on the contrary, an irrefragable proof of the divine character and authorship of the Scriptures. In this we are dealing to a certain extent with a palpable contemporary fact. There is such a nation extant in the world as the Jews, as Mr. Bradlaugh himself is compelled to admit. That nation is not of yesterday: its records go farther back into the remote dim regions of antiquity than those of any other nation under heaven, with the exception of the inscriptions on Egyptian and Assyrian remains and monuments, which are childish affairs compared with the magnificent writings of Moses. I must of course refer to those writings in elaborating the argument of this evening. That they are the writings of Moses is proved in several ways. First, there is the tradition of the Jews in all generations. They have said that Moses is the author of that book, and that of itself is a weighty, and in fact, conclusive argument, for how could such a reputation come to exist apart from the fact that Moses at the beginning did write them?

But it is said the Mahomedans are witnesses to the Koran. So they are; I admit it. And it is said the Mormons are witness to the writings of Smith. I admit it. But what have we then? We have a book admittedly written by Mahomet, and a book admittedly written by Joe Smith; but when we come to examine the books in the light of facts, we find evidence that Mahomet and Joe Smith are impostors. The result is the same in a less degree in the works admitted to be the productions of Zoroaster, Confucius, and other ancient writers. The authenticity admitted, their undivine character is self-manifest. All I ask Mr. Bradlaugh is to concede a similar process of treatment to the writing of Moses. That is, admit its authenticity on the evidence on which he admits the authenticity of the Koran, and then examine the book. Let him admit that just as the authenticity of the Koran is proved by the universal consent of the Mahomedans, so the authenticity of Moses is proved by the universal consent of the Jews. And, then go to the investigation of the books and see whether or not the allegation that it is a divine revelation is proved by its very contents.

My next witness to the authenticity of the writings of Moses is Jesus of Nazareth, whom I have a right to call, because I have proved his resurrection by arguments which Mr. Bradlaugh has not attempted to upset. The testimony of a man proved to be the Son of God by resurrection from the dead, must be true. Jesus recognises Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. In John v. 46, He says:—"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for HE WROTE OF ME. But if ye believe not HIS WRITINGS, how shall ye believe my words?" In Luke xvi. 29, he puts these words into the mouth of a parabolic character:—"They have Moses *and the prophets*; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." In Luke xxiv. 27, it is recorded concerning Christ that, after his resurrection, that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Logically this evidence is conclusive without anything else. But there is other evidence not so strong, which I produce, because Mr. Bradlaugh has a curious preference for the imperfect and blundering evidence of merely secondary writers, instead of going direct to the merits. I have already referred to Josephus. I have already shown that he (a careful, clear, and trustworthy writer) comes before us as a witness to the writings of Moses. It may be asked how did Josephus know? My answer is, Josephus was a man in office amongst the Jews, with access to all the means existing in the first century of forming a decision, and his writings show that he had the capacity for forming a just decision. The recognition of the writings of Moses by such a man, is of some weight in the scale. I have already referred to the

Septuagint as a collateral evidence of value. I might also mention the Samaritan version, which was made from the original ages before even the Septuagint, from a desire on the part of the Samaritans to have the books of Moses in their own possession. All these are valuable collateral evidences of the authenticity of the book now in question.

But let us now go to the book itself. I will affirm that, if you take God out of the five books of Moses, those five books fall to pieces. They cannot be understood on the hypothesis that they were written by a man to glorify himself, his name, or his nation; or to serve any sinister purpose whatever, or human purpose of any kind, minister or otherwise. Let us look at the evidence of this. If written by a man of his own notion, we know, from acquaintance with man universally, that the purpose would be to call attention to or create honour for somebody, or to serve some purpose congenial to human nature. Let us then test Moses by this hypothesis, by the hypothesis that his writings were merely a human production, and then you will see my meaning. If the object of Moses in the operation he conducted in connection with the Jewish nation was to make himself a great leader and make himself a great name, as Manetho says, it would have been necessary for him to conciliate the people by complimentary words, as all popular leaders in all ages have found it necessary to do and have done. He would speak to them pleasant things, and cheer them with prophecies of good. You will find that Moses did nothing of the sort, but indulged in language and assumed an attitude utterly inconsistent with any human object whatever. Let me draw attention to Deuteronomy ix., from the 4th to the 7th verses, and let me ask you to imagine either Moses or anyone else speaking thus while practising an imposture for the glorification of himself or the Jewish nation:—"Speak not thou in thine heart after that the Lord thy God hath cast them (the Canaanitish nations) out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. *Not for thy righteousness or for the uprightness of thy heart dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord swore unto thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it *for thy righteousness, FOR THOU ART A STIFF-NECKED PEOPLE.* Remember, and forget not, how *thou provokedst the Lord thy God in the wilderness, from the day thou didst depart out from the land of Egypt; until ye came unto this place ye have been rebellious against the Lord.*" Is that the way a patriot speaks to the people whose suffrages he canvasses, or whose good opinion he aims to secure, that his name may be sent down with fame to posterity? Every man can answer that question for himself. We all know the language of men who aim at a personal object. They flatter and speak well of those whom they seek to use as instruments of their personal ambitions. Moses never did so. What I have read is only a mere sample of his style. Let any one read his writings, and they will find they are all in the same strain. If God sent and was with Moses, the style of his address is explained. If God did not appear to Moses, but Moses, out of his own head, sought to accomplish a personal object, such language is incomprehensible.

I must be content on that point and hurry on to something else. I will next ask: Did the people glorify Moses? Did they accept him as their leader? If this book was written in order to glorify Moses or to glorify the Jewish nation—if Jewish transactions in their beginnings were merely human performances, with which God had nothing to do, or if this book had been written afterwards to create confidence in a merely traditional Moses, without reference to truth, it would have been carefully shown that, at the beginning and during all his life, Moses was accepted by the people; certainly, every circumstance tending to show rebellious conduct on the part of the people during all the circumstances attending their exodus from Egypt, and their passage through the wilderness, would have been suppressed. Instead of this, what do we find? Why, the people are described as in a state of continual revolt. Let me illustrate this by Exodus xvi. 2nd verse:—"And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of Israel came unto the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel *murmured against Moses and Aaron* in the wilderness; and the children of Israel said to them.

would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Again, when the spies sent before to see the land to which they were journeying, took an evil report, we read (Num. xiv. 1-5; ii. 22, 23) "And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would to God we had died in this wilderness. . . . Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain and let us return into Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. . . . And the Lord said unto Moses, how long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me for all the signs which I have showed among them? . . . Because all those men which have seen my glory and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times and have not hearkened to my voice, surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers."

Then there is the account of the conspiracy of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who rose against Moses with the support of the entire assembly, and whose rebellion was only quelled by miraculous destruction. Now, if God did truly send Moses, and if his statement to Korah, Dathan and Abiram be true, viz., "The Lord sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of mine own mind,"—(Num. xvi. 28.)—then the putting on record such a history is intelligible. But if these things never happened, how came they to be invented? What purpose could be served by the invention? No man invents a lie without an object, and what object could there be in insulting the national character by placing in the national archives such an invention? It is impossible to conceive such a thing. The narrative bears the stamp of truth: If true, its record is explained; and in that case, God is proved, and the authenticity and reliability of the Scriptures in general. I am content with the illustration adduced, though there are many others of the same sort, and I pass to the next point of my argument.

If Moses acted as a man out of his own head as the deviser and inventor of the law, he would have taken good care to have contrived that his hand in it would always be visible, so that credit would come to him as the author of it. Instead of that what do we find? We find him always attributing the law to God. e.g. "These are the commandments, the statutes and the judgment *which the Lord your God commanded to teach you.*"—(Deut vi. 1.) When expostulating with them for their rebellion, his language is, "*What are we?* Your murmurings are not against us but against the Lord."—(Deut. xvi. 8.) In Deut. iv. 20, this peculiarity comes out strongly in connection with an extraordinary instance of personal disparagement—incomprehensible on any other hypothesis but that of its truth. We find him saying: "*The Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day. Furthermore, the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over Jordan . . . but I MUST DIE IN THIS LAND.*" (Time called.)

MR. BRADLAUGH: I will dispose of a matter of fact first. Mr. Roberts has said that he had Tatian, Theophilus, Miletus, Athenagoras, Barnabas, Polycarp, Ignatius, and others giving evidence as to the existence of the New Testament gospels, before A.D. 150. I call for the writings of Tatian, and I sit down until they are produced. (Hear, hear.)

MR. ROBERTS: I have handed the documents to the chairman.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Producing them to the chairman won't do for me. Produce me extracts from Tatian. I have them all lying before me, and not one of them says what you pretend to say they do. If the book is there, I ask that it may be put into my hands. If not, Mr. Roberts has claimed credit for what he did not possess.

MR. ROBERTS: I never admitted I possessed the book in the sense of which you speak.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Give me the best reference you can. I don't want you to read it if you will give me the reference.

Mr. ROBERTS : I find on the case of Tatian it is the name of one of his books I rely upon as evidence of the existence of the New Testament, viz.: his *Harmony of the Four Gospels*.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Don't take up my time. Give me the books. Then I will read you what it is. I ask what I am to say to a man who pretended to put into the hands of the chairman that which he has not got? The first reference to Tatian is in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, in the 29th chapter. I ask if it is not wretched audacity for anyone to pretend that Eusebius's history is any sort of testimony whatever? Having denied that testimony, I now ask for Theophilus.

Mr. ROBERTS : I say the book is not here. There is evidence of "three books to Autolykus."

Mr. BRADLAUGH : You cannot produce it to me. The man offers to put the books in the hands of the chairman and yet they are not produced. So that the debate is simply ended so far as concerns the evidence put into my hands. I have got it all here. I ask for the book, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROBERTS : I never said I had it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Then the matter is disposed of so far as regards Theophilus. I ask for Mileto, and if it is not produced I won't go on with the debate.

Mr. ROBERTS : I produce evidence of Mileto having written a work, in which—

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Give me the book and I will read it.

Mr. ROBERTS : I produce the evidence upon which I founded my argument last night.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Mr. Roberts offered to leave in the hands of the chairman the evidence upon which the argument was based, and it is not produced. I say there is nothing in Mileto capable of the construction he put upon it, and I say he has no extract capable of the construction put upon it.

Mr. ROBERTS : I said he wrote a work in which he indirectly recognises the New Testament by speaking of the Old. I gave the title of it as my argument. The shorthand writer will bear me out in what I say.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Mr. Roberts has made an appeal to the shorthand writer. I know that there is a trustworthy gentleman* employed by Mr. Roberts's friends, and I call upon him to read from Mr. Roberts's first speech. If my memory serves me rightly, I remember that, over and over again, I challenged him to produce the authorities upon which he relied, and he at last said he would. As we are not to have Mileto, I ask for Athenagoras. I will wait for Athenagoras. Are you going to produce it?

Mr. ROBERTS : I will give you the quotation from him on which I rely.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : I don't want you to occupy my time with quotations. I must decline to continue the debate if I am to be thus dealt with. I say it is the greatest pretence of evidence I ever heard in my life. I am ashamed of it.

Mr. ROBERTS : I have submitted the evidence to the Chairman.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : But evidence submitted to the Chairman I don't accept as produced evidence. Give it to me.

Mr. ROBERTS : Then I will read it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Give it to me.

Mr. ROBERTS : I will when I have read it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : But why can't you give it me now?

Mr. ROBERTS : I have my own reasons. I will give you the book when I have read the quotation.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : It is manifestly unfair that this man should take up my half-hour.

Mr. ROBERTS : It is in answer to your own request.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : He is going to quote from Athenagoras.

Mr. ROBERTS : I read from his petition on behalf of the Christians.—(Page 11.) He said to the Emperor, in answer to the charge of Atheism : "To convince we are not mere Atheists, hear the maxims in which we are instructed : I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." That is a quotation from Matthew made in the middle of the second century.

Mr. BRADLAUGH : Give me the book. [Mr. Roberts hands the book to Mr. Bradlaugh.] Now, friends, Mr. Roberts said he would read to you from Athenagoras to prove the

* Mr. Arthur Andrew, of London.

existence of the gospels in the middle of the second century, and he begins by referring to his charge to the Emperor, and says the quotation is from Matthew. I say there is nothing in any writings attributable to Athenagoras that refers to Matthew at all. I say that that is an addition by a man called Brewer, and has no existence in Athenagoras at all—(A VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE: "That is only your assertion.")—Thank you for saying that is my assertion. I have taken the trouble to become acquainted with the matter, and I am not like the man who says he is not obliged at all to produce his authorities. When you tell me a man challenges another with access to a library, he ought to be armed with the evidence itself, instead of bringing Brewer's paltry work. Now, I ask you to hear what Murchine says, and you will judge of how much or how little Mr. Roberts knows of these things when I come to read it to you. You will find that one of the epistles he quoted to you was the epistle of Barnabas. Murchine says that, whilst, in his opinion, the epistle was the production of some Jewish writer, it was clearly a different person from Barnabas; and we find him saying just before, with reference to a number of works which bear the name of Clement:—"The epistles of Clement were falsely ascribed to that eminent father, for the purpose of securing for them great authority; and we find, during these times, various histories full of imposition and fable were composed by persons addicted to pious frauds, and were palmed upon the world." That is the evidence of your own witness against you. Now I put to you this, and I beg you will bear your mind upon it. You have cited Ignatius, Barnabas, Hermas, Clement, and Polycarp, to prove the writings of the apostles, and my answer to that was that, so far as they were concerned, not one of the gospel authors was mentioned in one of them—not one. I read to you from Justin Martyr a statement showing that whatever documents they did quote were not the documents of our gospels. I told you last night that I was fully assured that the writings of Tatian did not exist. Why did you not come here to-night and frankly say, "It is perfectly true, they do not exist?" for you clearly ought not to have quoted that with which you were not acquainted. It is perfectly true Mr. Roberts only relied on the name of Mileto's book; but I ask whether this is the style in which a debate of this kind should be conducted, when a speaker cannot pretend to something more than mere names. Mr. Roberts has told you, with respect to the Septuagint and Samaritan versions of the Pentateuch, that he relies on the Septuagint version, which is the only version available for the Pentateuch, the Samaritan only extending to the letter of the law and not one line beyond that. I have put this in the *Free Thinkers' Text Book*, and had come prepared for hearing the strongest things about it. Dr. Haynes says about the Septuagint, or Greek version, that it is not the original Bible, but what the interpreters have made it. Strictly speaking it appears to be the growth of at least two generations, and we might expect this from the nature of the thing. Mr. Roberts quoted Josephus as an authority for the Septuagint version, but there is no evidence, even in Josephus, as to the whole Septuagint. The express language of Josephus limits the translation to the books of the law, whatever they may mean; and therefore it is utterly impossible he could mean the whole of the Old Testament book. Mr. Roberts quotes Eusebius, whose works he calls trashy—don't forget, "trashy"—and, if trashy, he should not have produced them. You can buy the work at any library for 5s. 6d. Then, as to the letters of Ignatius, if some editions of them are forgeries, the great question is, which edition is and which is not a forgery. But come, if you please, a little further, to Spinoza, who says, "of the author or authors we know almost nothing; we entertain great doubts if they were written by the persons whose names they bear." If with Mr. Roberts we are to take Josephus, then the Old Testament he referred to is clearly not the book we have to-day. Thousands of passages might be read to show that the book he refers to is not the book Mr. Roberts is here to defend; and when Mr. Roberts tells me these are mere trifling matters, I want to know where the trifles are to begin or end? I cannot understand. If Mr. Roberts had said that he relied on the New Testament to prove the Old, I could have understood him. But is there anything in the New Testament to prove the existence of the Old? There is no mention of the book, beginning with Genesis and ending with Malachi. The very Septuagint contains matters of fact which are entirely different from our Bible. I pass from this to refer to what has been said as to Paul. None of the authorities who have been quoted refer to Paul at all, though we certainly have the manufactured

Christian evidences, which are the most childish authority in the world. I make no concealment of the fact that I do come prepared with authoritative evidences to support my views. If I were not I should not be fit to take part in a debate of this kind. I may now refer you to Lord Amberley's new book, p. 254. I am not reading this as evidence. I am reading an expression of opinion from a book in which I find every research. [Here Mr. Bradlaugh read an extract from Lord Amberley's new work, which the shorthand writer has not supplied.]

Let us look at some more of the internal evidences. We have a statement that, before the baptism, John knew Jesus, and thought himself unworthy to baptise him, and we have a statement that he did not know him before, but knew him on the announcement, "This is my beloved Son." We have Matthew xi. 2, 3, and Luke vii. 19. John sending to enquire whether Jesus was the Christ or not? We should think if John heard the declaration, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," he would not have thought it necessary to send messengers to ascertain whether Jesus was the Christ or not. And what answer did Jesus give? He does not remind John of the scene at the baptism, but he says, "Go and tell John you have seen me performing miracles, that the blind see, the lame walk, the leper is cleansed." I submit that one of these two statements is untrue, and that the entire part of the book which contains them cannot be otherwise. I would refer to the miracle of the loaves and fishes, where Jesus fed five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes; and I would refer to the worthy disciples, and to their forgetfulness of the miracles afterwards. In either case an authentic revelation of God would not be made in so ridiculous a fashion. Take the case of the miracle which is recited in three different ways in three of the evangelists—I mean the miracle of casting out the devils. Was it one man or two men? Was there one devil or two? or a legion? Is the story true or untrue, or is it divine revelation at all? If you took any other book with so many contradictions in so many pages you would resign or reject it. I come now to the alleged cursing of the fig tree. We are told that Jesus came to the fig tree, when the season was not in, and cursed it, because it had no fruit, which it could not have, not being the season. I ask, is that an authentic revelation? And take that declaration of Christ which is most important according to you—I mean the death and resurrection of Jesus. Take the gospels of Matthew and Mark; the last recorded words of Jesus, according to Matthew and to Mark, are, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani." If Jesus deemed God had forsaken him, when his death was to save the world, and he had so little confidence as to cry, in the bitterness of despair, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" am I to be condemned because I cannot see such a thing divine? Is not this the language of an enthusiast who had deluded others, and a man who was himself deluded? It is not certainly the language of a man who believed in the truth of his mission, which was to redeem the world. I refer you again to Matt. ii. 5, 6, where there is a pretended quotation from Micah v. 2, making Bethlehem the place of the advent of the governor that shall rule my people Israel. This made Hosea (xi. 1) deliberately untrue, for it was there said, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." My time is gone, and gone in such a way with nothing to answer that I need not regret it.

The CHAIRMAN: I may say, in my position of referee on points of order, I should not consider myself as referee on a subject like that submitted by Mr. Roberts, unless at the request of both parties. If, when the discussion is fully over, the gentlemen choose to refer any point to me I will have no objection, as far as I am concerned, but nothing but a mutual request would induce me to act in this way. Mr. Roberts will now occupy a quarter of an hour, either by a speech or by questioning Mr. Bradlaugh, who will answer categorically.

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

Mr. Bradlaugh, do you believe that the Jews are an ancient nation?—I believe they were an ancient race.

Do you believe they have always accepted Moses as the writer of the works bearing his name?—I don't think I have very clear evidence on the point. Some time ago

an eminent Jew wrote a letter, and he gives a statement of the arguments used by the Rabbis themselves against it.

Do you know that these writings have been all along attributed by that race to Moses?—I believe there were writings current amongst the Jews which the popular voice attributed to different people. I am not able to fix that popular voice. From the Bible I learn that the law was lost and found suddenly. From outside writings I learn that during the captivity they lost all their books.

Have the Jews always regarded Moses as their principal leader?—I should think not, so far as I am able to judge.

Have you any good reason to think otherwise?—The question of Moses's existence, like that of Buddha and Zoroaster, is very mythical.

Then you doubt whether Moses was their leader in the beginning of their history?—The whole of the alleged exodus is so very doubtful, I can find nothing to verify it.

Can you verify a myth from records of an historic character?—Yes in the case of the Buddhists, I have carefully worked out the system, and the remark equally applies to Zoroaster. In every case there has been some person semi-miraculous, or who is believed to be miraculous.

Do you admit there was an historic beginning in all cases?—I don't.

Do you think there was any historic beginning to the career of Moses?—I don't. The whole of the story is so monstrous that it looks as if the name itself was mythic.

What part of the account given of Moses is monstrous?—I will tell you: "the killing of all the cattle by a storm."

Do you mean to say it is monstrous and abstractly impossible for a storm to result in the killing of cattle?—I do, if the cattle were dead already. I will read it from the book. Do you ask for the proof of what I have said?

I did not ask for it. Do you consider that all miracles are impossible?—Yes, especially the killing of cattle twice over.

Why do you say they are impossible?—You have asked me if I believed them. I don't believe them to be possible because my definition of a miracle is: that which never happened in the past, don't happen in the present, and won't happen in the future.

Is that not a begging of the question?—No. Logically, the word miracle to me is without meaning. In Scripture the word miracle is used to denote events which experience gives no record of their possibility of execution.

Are we to make our experience the measure of the possible?—I mean to make experience the measure of my possibility.

Do you mean to say you only believe in what you have seen?—I never said anything so intolerably stupid.

What do you mean, then, by forming a judgment of the possible on the basis of experience?—I don't limit experience to my own experience only. I mean the recorded experience of other men too.

Then you will admit the experience of others as a basis of belief in things you have not yourself experienced?—I have said so.

Why do you not admit the experience of the apostles in the matter of the resurrection of Christ?—I have already early in this debate admitted that evidence that applies directly to ordinary occurrences, and can be judged of by ordinary experience, cannot be so judged when it applies to extraordinary occurrences.

Then in the case of extraordinary occurrences, you would not be governed by what you have called "the best experience of the best men?"—If you appeal to me I must be allowed to be judge on such matters myself.

In such matters, you would not be guided by the experience of others?—Not if inconsistent with the operation of the senses.

You would not believe what others have seen unless you considered it possible?—I don't say that.

Then I ask you why you refuse to accept the testimony of the apostles who testified the performance of miracles, and evidenced the sincerity of their testimony in so many ways?—Just on the same principle that I should not believe that Mr. Bradlaugh turned three somersaults on the platform, and then stood on his head in the course of the discussion last night, because it is unreasonable.

Do you say it is unreasonable for a man to rise from the dead?—Yes. Because the

word life means organic function, and if he died and re-appeared, it would then be a new life.

Upon what philosophic ground do you hold it is impossible for a man that had once lived to be put together again?—I did not say once lived; I said a man that once died.

Of course; my question implies that. I ask on what ground you deny the possibility of a man who has once lived and died being re-organised and made to live again?—It is beyond the range of my experience, and I have no evidence that it is within the experience of other men.

Is it not possible that such a thing might occur without coming within the range of your experience or that of other men?—I don't know.

Do you admit that, many ages ago, there were no human beings on the globe?—I have reason to believe that, some millions of years ago, there was not a human being upon earth.

Would not your principle lead you, had you been alive then, to say it was impossible human beings could ever appear on earth?—Not being alive then, I cannot see how I could have formed an opinion one way or the other. I don't imagine a time when nobody lived.

Well, I will put it retrospectively. Would not your rule of belief lead to this conclusion, that at the same time no human being had as yet appeared upon earth, it was an impossibility that they ever could appear, because it was not within the experience of any living being upon earth?—It is not for me to say what might have been; I deal with experience, and here we are.

And may it not yet be a matter of experience that men will rise from the dead?—There are no known laws in the universe to warrant the idea.

Do you mean to say that your knowledge of the universe is sufficient to enable you to say that there may not be a latent power somewhere equal to the reproduction of dead men?—We don't know everything, of course.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

Will you kindly tell me whether you think a book could be Divine revelation which provided that a man might steal a woman, rob her of her virtue, and then turn her out in the world without any sort of recompence?—I decline to answer the question in that form.

Do you know that Deut. xxi. 11-14, does preach that?—No, it does not.

I will read it to you: "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou has taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife, then shalt thou bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; and she shall put the raiment of her captivity off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month; and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife; and it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her." Don't that say exactly what I say?—No.

Do you hold that to be divine revelation which provides that a man may buy a servant, keep him for seven years, and if he cannot buy himself off at the end of that time, to bore his ear with an awl. Do you hold that to be divine revelation?—Yes.

Do you hold it to be a divine revelation that of people who are not of the Jewish race, the Jews may buy bondmen and bondwomen, and take them as an inheritance and have them in possession for ever?—Yes.

Do you hold it to be divine revelation that a man might beat his slave, and if that his slave live for three days after the beating, then the master shall escape his punishment?—I object to the term "slave" with its modern associations.

Then I will substitute "servant." May a man buy a servant and beat him, and if

the servant does not die in two days the master shall escape punishment?—The law of Moses provided that, and I believe the law of Moses to be divine.

Do you believe that David never did anything that was wrong?—No I do not believe that.

Do you think that the text which says that he always did that which was right in God's eyes is divine revelation?—Allow me to read it to you. That is said with qualification.

What are you going to read?—1 Kings xv. 5. "David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, *save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.*"

But it says in xiv. 8; "Yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart to do that only which was right in mine eyes."—Yes, that is correct.

Do you think it is true?—I do.

Do you think it is true that David did keep all God's commandments and follow Him with all his heart?—Yes, with the exception mentioned in the 8th verse.

I ask you whether in the 14th of 1st of Kings, and 8th verse, there is any exception made?—No.

Then is the 8th verse true or not?—It is true of the general tenour of David's life.

Was David a liar?—David sometimes said that which was not true.

Was he a murderer?—No, except in the case in question.

In how many cases within a few hundred had David murdered?—Only in the one case of Uriah the Hittite.

Did not David murder many others?—There was a great difference in those cases. To kill is not to murder, if God commands.

Was not David a thief?—No.

Did he not take property which did not belong to him?—In a certain sense, yes; in a certain sense, no. I can explain the difference if you will allow me.

Then with these slight exceptions David did keep all God's commandments—murdering, stealing, lying and adultery—this being the description of a man after God's own heart? Is stealing a wife, while her husband is fighting for the thief, good or bad?—Bad.

Is murdering men good or bad?—Bad.

Is stealing property good or bad?—Bad.

Did David do all that?—No.

Do you mean to say that when he was sheltered by the king of Gath he did not commit murder and robbery?—I mean to say that the law of God in the case in question authorised what David did, and, therefore, it was neither murder nor robbery.

Will you kindly tell me who authorised David to kill the subjects of the king by whom he was sheltered?—There was a general law under which Israel took possession of Canaan, and that was that nothing should be left alive. The Canaanitish nations were sunk in wickedness, and God had given them over to destruction.

Do you think God sanctioned men seeking shelter and protection from people they meant to exterminate?—As they were only in the position of savages or animals, the action was not of the character you impute to it.

Then the killing of savages is not in your judgment immoral?—Not if commanded by God.

Do you think there could be a divine revelation which commanded people to kill other people against whom they had no cause of offence?—They had offended against God.

Do you think there could be a divine revelation which enjoined any people to kill all the males of the nation and all women who were mothers or wives?—I do.

Do you think there could be a divine revelation which alleges that when mercy was shown, God was angry with the merciful?—Give me the case you refer to.

Do you think there is such a case as that?—I decline to answer the question in that form.

Do you mean to deny that, more than once, there were cases in which the Jews spared the people they went against, and God's displeasure was kindled against them?—I admit there are such cases.

You admit they destroyed people they had no quarrel against?—Yes

And you think that is good?—Yes, under the circumstances.

Should you think it good for to-day?—If God commanded me I would do it.

You had better take care whom you try it on!—No fear; If God gives me a commission, I shall be able to execute it.

Don't you hold that under any circumstances war by a people against another with whom they have no cause of quarrel, is monstrous, cruel, and merciless?—If God has not commanded it, Yes.

Do you think God's commands can make a bad thing a good thing?—No.

Yet you deem all God's commandments good?—There is a difference between God and man as to what is good and what is bad. God has a right to do with his own property as he likes.

You hold that God may make a man good by torturing him?—I had not that thought.—(Time called.)

The CHAIRMAN: It is becoming necessary that I must ask you to maintain better order. That is to say, to do justice to the speakers, let them have the argument between themselves. You can judge, moreover, when you have the printed discussion if there has been any mistake. I am speaking to the few who occasionally interrupt. I judge the body of the meeting will be on my side during the remaining hour.

Mr. ROBERTS: You will have observed that Mr. Bradlaugh has not attempted to discuss the case of Moses from its internal peculiarities, upon which hangs a very powerful argument. I will not follow him in his remarks on what are called the Apostolic Fathers, because I do not attach any particular importance to them. I cited them merely because Mr. Bradlaugh took the unreasonable position of denying that there was evidence of the existence of the New Testament prior to A.D. 150. And now I have produced the evidence, he tries to make light of it. Mr. Bradlaugh's attempt to disprove the Bible has been to rehearse alleged difficulties and discrepancies, some of which, in cross-examination, I have endeavoured to explain. He has gone into the same course every night. He might have gone into the contradictions in the way the Socratic method allows, but he has not done so. He dwelt on them in long speeches; perhaps because he knew their force would disappear under the Socratic treatment, while they seem to show for something in a speech. Well, I will now notice some of them. I do so with reluctance, and only lest a false impression might remain if I were to ignore them, and at once resume the thread of my discourse about Moses. I take up, first, the alleged discrepancy between the 24th of Luke and the 1st of the Acts on the question of the forty days. Acts i. states that Christ was seen for forty days after his resurrection, and that his disciples, during that time, tested his reality by many infallible proofs. Mr. Bradlaugh says this is inconsistent with Luke xxiv. There is nothing whatever in the objection; for though the 1st of the Acts certainly specifies forty days, Luke mentions no time at all. Where can there be a contradiction in such a case? Remember that Luke is the writer of the Acts as well as of the gospel; and the fact that he mentions forty days in the Acts as the length of time Christ spent with his disciples is to be taken as a supplement in the one case of an omission in the other. Perhaps Mr. Bradlaugh may have something to say in reply to that. He did not develop his objection with the distinctness necessary to enable me to be more particular. I fancy the suggestion is that the whole of the 24th of Luke, including Christ's ascension, is crowded into one day, and that, according to Luke, Christ ascended on the day of his resurrection; but there is nothing to shew this. It was simply stated that he did this and that, without telling us of the time at all. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles tells us the time he lingered in the midst of the apostles, giving them proofs that they were dealing with a real person.

Then Mr. Bradlaugh says that to Abraham God made a promise which he has not fulfilled. If he had stopped there, he would have been within the bounds of truth. But when he argued that, because it is not fulfilled, therefore it will not be, he was illogical. It would not be difficult to show that it is the teaching of the New Testament that the promise will be fulfilled. But Mr. Bradlaugh said it never could be because there has been a gap, and that there can be no gap in "ever." It depends upon when "ever" begins. In this case the expression "for ever" goes back

to the time of the promise. It begins with the time of performance. There is evidence that Abraham himself recognised this. In Gen. xv. we read that this was addressed to him:—"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again." That shows the promise was not to take immediate effect. A promise does not involve immediate possession. If an interval elapses, and the promise has not been recalled, that is no reason for concluding the promise will never be fulfilled. We are expressly told in Hebrews xi. 13, "These all died in faith, *not having received the promises*, but having SEEN THEM AFAR OFF." Faith, of which Abraham was the type, is defined by Paul to be "believing in the promises of God." This of itself involves the conclusion that the promise to Abraham was not to be fulfilled at that time. The Bible affirms that Abraham has not received the promise, and yet Mr. Bradlaugh makes use of the fact that he has not received the promise as a proof that the Bible is telling lies. Extraordinary argument! which requires no further notice. The proof is entirely the other way. I am sorry Mr. Bradlaugh is sacrificing good time by forcing these trifles on my notice. He asks me to decide whether there were one, two, three, or more women at the sepulchre on the morning of Christ's resurrection. My answer is very brief. There was one, two, and three and more. When two or more narratives are proved to be true, they must be in harmony in their details, though they are apparently discrepant, and this discrepancy is a proof that the gospel is not a forgery; if it had been a forgery, the Four Gospels would have been made to tally precisely. Whereas, like all cases of true witnesses, three or four men speak to the same facts, but vary in their narrative of them, though consistent when all put together. I put them together in the following manner:—

The first fact to be noted is that there were a number of women, related to the transactions of the resurrection morning. We find (Matt. xxvii. 55; Mark xv. 40-41) that "many women" had followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem, "among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joscs, and the mother of Zebedee's children." These many women were witnesses of the crucifixion (*ibid*), and also of the deposit of the body of Christ in the tomb of Joseph (Luke xxiii. 55, also Mark xv. 47); after which they returned and prepared sweet spices and ointments, and rested on the Sabbath (Luke xxiii. 56), having arranged for an early visit to the sepulchre on the first day morning to embalm—(Mark xvi. 1). In the early visit, most of the "many women" appear to have taken part (Luke xxiv. 1), and at first in one band. The order of events seems to be this:

1.—Before the arrival of the women, there had been an earthquake and angelic manifestation attendant on the resurrection of Jesus, throwing the keepers of the tomb into a panic.—(Matt. xxviii. 2.)

2.—The women, who had wondered how they were to obtain access to the tomb, arrive and find the stone rolled to one side, and the sepulchre empty. They conclude the body had been taken away, and are perplexed.—(Luke xxiv. 4.)

3.—Mary Magdalene, leaving the other women at the sepulchre in their perplexity, returns and tells Peter (Jno. xx. 2), saying, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

4.—In Mary's absence, two angels appear at the sepulchre, in whose presence the remaining women stoop, affrighted, to the earth. The angels inform the women of the resurrection of Christ, and tell them to go and tell his disciples. They depart quickly with fear and great joy, and run to bring the disciples word.—(Matt. xxviii. 8.)

5.—Mary returns with Peter and John, who inspect the empty sepulchre, and see the left clothes of the dead. Not knowing the Scriptures that Jesus should rise again from the dead, sorrowing curiosity satisfied, they go away again to their own home.—(John xx. 2-10.)

6.—Mary remains behind, and stands outside the sepulchre weeping. In a short time she takes another look into the sepulchre, and this time she sees the angels who had some time before appeared to the rest of the women. She does not know them to be angels, but probably supposes them to be visitors. They ask her why she weeps. She says, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Having said this, she steps back to resume her position outside the sepulchre, and sees a third person, whom she supposes to be the gardener. She instantly

asks him where he has laid the body of Jesus. The response reveals to her the delightful fact that it was Jesus himself. Forbidding her to touch him, he tells her to go and tell his disciples that he is about to ascend. The interview terminated, Mary departs.—(John xx. 11-17.)

7.—The other women, yet on their way, having been angelically apprised of the resurrection, are met by Jesus, who salutes them, and tells them to go and ask his brethren to meet him in Galilee. They hold him by the feet and worship him. There is no interdiction against touching him, as in the case of Mary, the cause being removed.—(Matt. xxviii. 9-10.)

8.—Mary Magdalene arrives at the place of the disciples' stay, about the same time as "Joanna and Mary, the mother of James, and the other women that were with them."—(Luke xxiv. 10.)

9.—The women (all of them) tell what had happened; but their words seem to the apostles as idle tales.

10.—Two of their company afterwards (during the day) go on some business to Emmaus; and while on the way, are joined by the Lord, who converses with them, but holds their eyes, and reveals himself to them at the end of the journey and then disappears.—(Luke xxiv. 13-31.)

11.—Peter, being out by himself, is also visited by the Lord, and returns and declares the fact to the assembled disciples, who begin to believe it must be true.—(Luke xxiv. 33-34.)

12.—The two from Emmaus return and narrate their experience.

13.—While they are discussing the matter, Jesus himself appears, shows the nail marks on his hands and feet, submits to be handled, and eats before them in their midst, Thomas being absent.

14.—Thomas returns after the interview, but refuses to believe what he is told, unless he sees Christ for himself, and is allowed to put his fingers in the holes of the nails and spear.

15.—Eight days afterwards, the disciples being again assembled, and Thomas being with them, Jesus again appears in their midst, and addresses himself specially to Thomas, whose scepticism disappears before the evidence.

16.—Afterwards the disciples return to Galilee, where Christ appears to them several times, and finally, at the end of forty days, the disciples having returned to Jerusalem, he takes leave of them at Bethany.—(Time called.)

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts says that I did not make my objection about Luke and the forty days of the Acts quite clear. I will try to do so now. I say the whole of the events following the resurrection are limited to one day by the 24th chapter of Luke. You will find the story as distinct as possible. First, the journey from Emmaus: they "rose up the same hour" and returned to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven gathered together; then Christ appears, and after talking to them, he led them out to Bethany. If that don't mean one day, language is not of much use. That is corroborated by Mark xvi., which says that, when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared unto two of them, and afterwards to the eleven. "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." I say this chapter leaves no room for forty days. Then, as to the women, I say the discrepancy is equally proved. Mr. Roberts says, that if forged, there would have been no discrepancy. I never said the gospels were forged. I say, like the mythic books of all religion, they have germs of historic fact, with the gradual addition of traditions. We may admit that, as ordinary men telling a story they believe, they vary, but we ought not to be damned or saved for our belief or non-belief of that story. In the case of two reporters, one might leave out some words, and another might misunderstand others, and then some discrepancies might be expected; but in a narrative divinely commissioned by God to give the exact truth, we should not expect that sort of thing. Matthew gives two women—the two Marys; Mark mentions two Marys and Salome; Luke named Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, "and other women that were with them;" and John only specifies Mary Magdalene. Mr. Roberts says all this is true; to use his own phrase, it is a real discrepancy on the surface, but that the discrepancy may be

explained away. I must say that Mr. Roberts has a very different notion as to what is good evidence from myself; and I put my notions to you very strongly. When as to David, he says that, with the exception of the affair with Uriah the Hittite, David never did anything that was not good. I cannot help reminding him of what is recorded in Samuel xxvii. I find that David went to Achish, king of Gath, for shelter. "And David said unto Achish, if I have now found grace in thine eyes let them give me a place in some town in the country that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee? Then Achish gave him Ziklag; wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day." In return for this, David smote the land and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned to Achish. David saved neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath. I say that was the conduct of an ungrateful scoundrel, who knew he was doing wrong. He was a traitorous thief, who murdered the people and stole their cattle. If that is religion, save me from that religion. Then we come to another case. Mr. Roberts don't think that David robbed. In 1 Samuel xxv., two chapters before the one I have read from, we find that David asked Nabal to give things to him, the only justification being that he had not already taken them; and when Nabal in strong language said he would not do it, David prepared himself to take them by force, but Nabal's wife met him and he took her. Mr. Roberts said that David committed no offence except in the case of Uriah the Hittite, and that these people were savages. I don't wonder at the mischief done in Patagonia or Terra del Fuego of old. Why should they be killed because they are savages? Were they consulted by the God of high heaven before He made them? With such savage doctrines, such inhuman and damnable doctrines, instead of being an Atheist as I am, I would be an Anti-theist, if I thought it would avail—(A VOICE: "Shut up.") That is just what I am doing with your Bible. In the 9th of Exodus, you will find that all the cattle of Egypt died, and you will find, in the 19th verse, a caution was sent to those who believed, in order that they might escape with their cattle, so that they should not die; and we find that those that left their cattle in the field, discovered that they had become victims in the storm, although they had already been killed in the 6th verse. Mr. Roberts says that the promise of the land to Abraham is misunderstood by Mr. Bradlaugh. Of course, if you have a £5 note given to you, and have ten thousand promised to you that you shall have them for ever, and you never receive one of them, that is a promise, and it is broken. That is the case of Abraham. The words I have read to you: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever." He never did give it. Mr. Roberts says, "But he will when Christ comes; and, therefore, pray Mr. Bradlaugh, what will you say to Christ then?" I don't know. We shall see. Wait till it happens. Then Mr. Roberts says that the texts about cruelty are not capable of the construction I put upon them, because these people may have been ordered to be punished. I draw attention to Deut. xx. 10: "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it." If the nation will make peace, they shall all be slaves; but if they won't, "but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it; and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword; but the women, and the little ones and the cattle, and all that is in the city shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies which the Lord thy God hath given thee." I ask if that is not a horrible and terrible doctrine? I ask how can that be divine revelation which is so full of cruelty? I ask whether it is not savage? This was the language which justified negro slavery, and still supports the Coolie trade. It is said these slaves are inferior beings—"savages." Why, that is language which might have been uttered in some far-off corner of the globe? I never expected to hear it in Birmingham. I hold slavery is a damnable cruelty everywhere; but where we have the stronger intellect against the savage, it is ten times more cruel. How, then, shall we further proceed? Shall I follow Moses when conjuring with the magicians? Is that an authentic revelation from God which brought up the wicked frogs from the waters of Egypt to spread over the land? Is this believed which says that there was darkness over all the land of Egypt, but there was light in the dwellings of the children of Israel, though they might be living in

the same house or be immediate neighbours, there being thus for the time light and dark, patchwork fashion? Follow Moses through his zig-zag journey, during which the clothes of the people were not to wear out? Imagine, a Jewish baby two months old on leaving Egypt arriving at Palestine in the same clothes 40 years after! Follow Moses, when in the war between the Amalekites and the Jews, he, like some Duke of Cambridge, seeks a place of safety while the battle goes on. Shall I follow him while the drooping hands are being held up until the Amalekites are beaten? Shall I follow him through the absurdities of the quails and the manna? Shall I follow him up the Mount where God says to him, "Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them?" Shall I follow him where he persuades God that he is wrong, and repenteth him of the evil which he thought to do to the people? Follow Moses! I have followed him a step too far. Is this Bible an authentic revelation, or is it a record of a hundred different myths linked together from the minds of a thousand different men? I have never, from the first speech I made in this debate, said that this work is the work of forgers; and no man, no honest man, would keep me to that which I don't advance.

Mr. ROBERTS: There are always two ways of looking at every case, and he pursues the best course who puts all the facts together harmoniously. I daresay I might appeal to the experience of every one as to mystery hanging over some particular incident, till one fact is ascertained which throws all the rest into beautiful harmony. So it is in this matter. Many things appear jumbled and inconsistent if they are looked at apart from the central fact. I don't wonder that Mr. Bradlaugh does not understand the Bible because he ignores its backbone, so to speak. As I said in my opening address, take God from the Bible and you take reason and all that is intelligible away from it, and lay it open to all the harsh unfriendly sayings in which Mr. Bradlaugh indulges as to its principles, its ordinances, and its history. Recognise the book as it stands in its completeness and it appears in a totally different aspect. In fact its divinity appears from itself. This will be seen if you try to apply to it Mr. Bradlaugh's hypothesis of its character. Mr. Bradlaugh's judgment of the book is that it is a human production. Now if that judgment of it be right, then its internal peculiarities ought to agree with it. We ought on such a theory of it to see human principles at work, the same as in everything else of human evolution. My argument is that there are facts in the case that defy explanation upon any human principles. I have rehearsed some of them. I show that some phases of the recorded attitude of Moses cannot be explained unless we accept the theory of his divine mission. On Moses, then, I propose to retain your attention during the short time at my disposal. It might please Mr. Bradlaugh better if I were to follow the assertions he has made this evening, but I must do my duty. I am here to affirm the truth of the Bible. To prove this affirmation requires argument and I would be precluded from entering upon this argument were I to do as Mr. Bradlaugh wishes, for it would take all the time at my disposal. But there is a way out of the dilemma. If Mr. Bradlaugh will affirm that the Bible is a myth, a human production, or undivine I will agree, as I have already said, to meet him for a similar period to this discussion, and it would then be my duty to follow him in all points and particulars, and to show that none of them were inconsistent with the fact that the book consists of reliable and authentic records of the proceedings of God in human affairs. Mr. Bradlaugh referred as a matter of animadversion to the fact that Moses took the Israelites into a sterile part of the world. This is one of those points that, in my judgment, tell in support of the professions of the Bible; for such a proceeding is unintelligible, if Moses was not directed to do it by God, who had power to sustain them there. If God directed him to do it, the proceeding is a perfectly rational one. But if Moses acted out of his own head, what possible explanation could be given of his taking the people into a region where it was impossible they could obtain sustenance? Manna was given. That Mr. Bradlaugh treated as an invention. Upon that I have to say that, if the manna had been an invention, something better would have been invented than that. For what are the facts concerning this manna? That the people murmured about it; that they chode with Moses; they re-called to mind the leeks and garlies of Egypt, and wished themselves back again. The fact of their murmuring is recorded; and if the

murmuring occurred, it is a proof the manna was given, and that God was working with Moses; for Moses could not bring down manna to feed so large an assembly. If the murmuring did not occur, what conceivable object could the inventor of the story have had in inventing the murmuring? It may be asked, why did not God provide the children of Israel with something better than manna? Why not roast beef and plum-pudding and wine? which certainly would have been the sort of thing invented if the story of Exodus was a Jewish invention for the glorification of the nation. They would then certainly have been represented as having received in the wilderness a plentiful supply of first-class articles. Instead of that, here is an article which the people did not relish and soon got tired of. What was the reason for feeding the people on this peculiar kind of food? Mark the reason! Deut. viii. 16:—"Who (God) fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, *that He might humble thee*, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." You will judge for yourselves whether it is possible to admit that this could have been an invention. Invention is always for a purpose, and that purpose the glorification of the people concerned. In this case, no such purpose is served, but the contrary. The theory of invention has no reasonable standing ground; while, on the other hand, if it is not invention, but a record of what actually occurred, the occurrence and the record of it have a reasonable explanation, and in that case the divinity of the Bible is proved. Just listen to the context, and imagine whether the language is possibly that of an inventor, or a man seeking to use the Jews for his own glorification: "When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee. Beware that thou forget the Lord thy God in not keeping His commandments and His judgments and His statutes which I command thee this day. Lest when thou hast eaten and art full and hast built goodly houses and hast dwelt therein, and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, then thy heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." You see Moses never takes the credit of the Egyptian deliverance to himself.—(Time called.)

Mr. BRADLAUGH: The remark has been made that if we take this book as a human production we cannot understand it. How useful that is. We have no other books of a similar character to which similar objections apply? Have we Lord Amberley's new book, in which he has two sub-divisions, one of which he applies to holy persons and the other to holy books:

"Under the title 'Holy Persons,' we have Confucius or Khung-fu-tsze, the founder of Confucianism; Lao-tsé, the founder of Taoism; Sakyamuni or Guatama Bhudda, the founder of Buddhism; Zarathustra or Zoroaster, the founder of Parseeism; Mahommed or Mahomet, the founder of Islamism."

Each of these has religious books, some more and some less ancient than ours, to which similar objections do apply. Then Mr. Roberts says, "I won't answer Mr. Bradlaugh's objections to the Bible now, because that is not now my business. I will do it in another discussion." Why, during three nights, we have diminished considerably as regards the number of the audience; and if we continue to diminish till the sixth night, there will be nobody left but the disputants and their committee. I am not so foolish as to incur a second infliction of this sort if I can help it. I accepted Mr. Roberts's challenge in this case because I knew he was regarded as a fair representative man of a body of religionists whom I had heard well spoken of here and in America. I have met with strong men and weak men among them, but all I believe reasonable and respectable men; but, as regards Mr. Roberts, I have done my whole duty in accepting this challenge. If Mr. Roberts has the victory, I shall be quite content, and if he thinks I am unwise enough to submit to another six nights, all I can say is he don't know me as well as I know myself. But I will tell you what I will do. If he can get half-a-dozen clergymen of the Church of England or ministers of other bodies to back him as their representative, then I am bound to meet him in a second debate; but I have accepted now his challenge, and my reason for not accepting a second is that I don't think he is competent to treat the subject he has undertaken to treat. I don't think it would be doing justice to

Christians to do it. And I will tell you why. I would not willingly have chosen a weak man, when I might have had a stronger man. I do not, therefore, fear; for I have occupied too many years upon the platform to be afraid. I call a weak man a man who pretends to quote works he is unacquainted with. You here, to-night, who have listened so far, especially ladies, will bear with me for a moment. I have not chosen to consider whether I have been speaking to believers or unbelievers, but I have here an extract from *A String of Pearls*, collected and strung together by my friend Mr. C. C. Cattell:—"A believer is one who takes for granted anything, sense or nonsense; while he who examines for himself into the truth or falsehood of any statement, and has the courage to avow his conclusion, is by the ignorant and prejudiced, designated an infidel. Such were, in their time, the great reformers, the philosophers, and the best men of past times, who were severely persecuted; as Aristotle, Descartes, Socrates, Virgilius, Trithemisia, Pythagoras, and others"—(A VOICE: "Has he got his portrait in the book?") Yes, and if yours had been beside it, it would have been the portrait of an indecent donkey who could not keep quiet. What I wanted to point out to you when that indecent interruption took place was that, if it be true that I shall suffer so severe a penalty as has been foreshadowed at some future time at the coming of Christ, the more reason you have for bearing with me and try to convince me and convert me now—the more reason because it is not alone for myself. You think my denials deserve a penalty, but there are thousands whom my voice influences—thousands of young men whom my voice is influencing. You may think I am not in earnest, but where is the inducement to be an infidel? An outlaw in early life from my country for my opinions, it is enough that they have stopped my way in many a walk in life. Say what you will, you will not deny me some powers of speech; you won't deny me the acquaintance necessary to deal with these subjects. If a desire to improve my home later in my life should draw me from public view to make my means of life, my advocacy would still continue amongst those with whom I lived. I find the whole of the religion of the world centred against myself, and those young men around me. You won't destroy my influence with hisses and such like demonstrations. You can only do so by meeting us man for man and woman for woman, and in the spirit of your book try and convert us, but not by taking up the first stone to smite us to the earth.

Sixth Night,

THURSDAY, 22nd JUNE, 1876,

IN THE TEMPERANCE HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

THE CHAIR WAS OCCUPIED BY MR. GEORGE H. ST. CLAIR.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, this being the last night of the debate, time is of more consequence. I trust it is not necessary to make a single remark, and I shall sit down at once, asking Mr. Roberts to commence on the affirmative side as usual.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, on this, the last night of the debate, it is my duty to submit to you the strongest of the arguments which I have to bring forward in substantiation of the proposition that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation. My contention to-night is that the prophecies of the Bible—so explicit, so sober, and so useful in their character, being in these respects so unlike the vague, incoherent, irrational predictions of the Greek augurs and other contemporary pretenders, are an evidence of the divinity of the authorship of the Bible—evidence which becomes simply overwhelming when we consider their fulfilment in the accomplished history of mankind. That you will perceive is a very large subject, but I shall have to treat it in a very small way on account of limited time.

If there is one feature more characteristic of the Bible than another, it is the peculiarity of prophecy—the foretelling of coming events. It runs—I will not say as a golden thread or vein, but rather as a broad belt or seam of precious metal—throughout the book, beginning at the very beginning, and only ending at the last chapter of Revelations. Genesis iii., for example, contains a comprehensive prediction of human redemption, "That the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and that at last the seed of the woman shall triumph, into which in detail I do not now enter, having more palpable matter in hand. I will not enter minutely into the history of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose history is replete with the element of prophecy; nor into the history of Israel, of which the same may be said. I will bring before you those prophecies which, both for their extensiveness and frequency, and the remarkable manner in which they have been fulfilled, are visible to the eyes of all the nations of the earth. I refer first to the predictions which have been realised in the history of the Jewish nation.

Mr. Bradlaugh's notions on the subject are somewhat indefinite, but he was bound to admit last night that the Jews were an ancient race, going back at least 3,000 years, and that they have, all that time, had documents which they have regarded as those of Moses, and which they have all that time regarded as divine. I shall quote from those documents, because their reception for so long a period is a proof that they are so entitled to be received. As I have said, the predictions are so frequent and extensive that I shall have to be content with a mere selection, at the same time premising that they are but a sample or two of hundreds.

We have in the 26th chapter of Leviticus, the 31st to the 36th verses, a statement which I will now read: "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the

land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye *be* in your enemies' land; *even* then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it. And upon them that are left *alive* of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth." I call attention to a similar statement in the book of Deuteronomy by the same speaker. In Deut. xxviii. 49, 50, 61, we read: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old nor show favour to the young. . . . Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee until thou be destroyed." I should like to read other illustrations of the same thing, but I must be content to refer to one specimen from each of the prophets: Isaiah vi. 11-12; Jer. v. 15-20; Ezek. v. 5-17; Dan. xii. 7; Hosea ix. 17; Joel i. 1-6; Amos viii. 12; Micah. 5-16; Zeph. i. 12-18. &c., &c. I add to the list the prediction of Christ himself, who spoke upon the same subject in the following terms. In Luke xxi. 24, he was foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities which should befall the Jewish nation, and at verse 24 he says: "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." As a comment upon all these predictions, I simply point to the fact of the desolation of Jerusalem under the foot of the Gentiles for eighteen centuries, and the dispersion of the Jews among all the civilised nations under heaven. Here is the prophecy: there is its fulfilment. Can it be possible for prophecies to be fulfilled more completely than these? The Jews are the most valuable witnesses of the Bible's truth. Mr. Bradlaugh did not quite comprehend my argument as to their continuous existence being involved in the question of the truth of the Bible, and I will make the argument plainer now, since in itself it involves the fulfilment of prophecy in the most specific manner. The simple prophecy that the Jew would remain in all nations until a certain time, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," would alone require, if true, that the Jews must be in existence at the present time. But I will make the argument more manifest than that. In Jeremiah xxx. 11, we read: "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I *not* make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Again, Amos ix. 8:—"Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saying that I *will* not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord." In Deut. xxxii. 26, we have a memorial song—a prophetic song: prophetic of Israel's future experiences, which Moses committed to the custody of Joshua, the son of Nun; a very remarkable composition, certainly, if it was the production of a patriot who wished to ingratiate himself with the people. It is worthy to be read through; but I must confine myself to an extract, as bearing on the point in view:—"I said I would scatter them into corners; I would make the remembrance of them to cease among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high; the Lord hath not done all this." Here you see is an express reservation of the Jews from destruction for a season; and, accordingly, here they are in our midst. God has preserved them from generation to generation. The arrangements of human affairs are at God's disposal and not in human hands, although men think they are the initiators in the case. Then I conclude this part of the argument by calling attention to this, that at the time spoken of when the promised Messiah shall be manifested in great glory, we read that "He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Israel from the four corners of the earth," whence it follows that, up to that period, they will be found in that position, and there they now are.

I will now allude to the second point which Mr. Bradlaugh equally failed to comprehend, which is that the truthfulness of the Scriptures requires that there should be at this day a dominant Christianity—political, tyrannical, and corrupt—a complete perversion of the original thing. I now call attention to the proofs of this. I begin

with Paul, who, in Acts xx. 28, says: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and unto all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this that, *after my departure*, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also *of your own selves* shall men arise and SPEAK PERVERSE THINGS." In writing to Timothy (4th chapter 3rd verse) he says: "The time will come when *they will not endure sound doctrine*: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." There we have a prediction of departure from the truth as apostolically delivered. I now produce the evidence that this was to grow into a political shape, and give the world an ecclesiastical imposture, supported by the sword. Paul's brethren in Thessalonica had been agitated about the coming of Christ as an event which was about to happen, but he knew it could not happen until certain things occurred. In 2 Thess. ii. he tells us what these certain things are. He says: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. . . . And now ye know what withholdeth that he should be revealed in his time. Only he who hindereth will hinder till he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Therefore, according to Paul's prophetic foresight, there ought to have been in our past times an extensive corruption of Christianity, resulting in the development of a pretender to divine authority, who, as one head over all, should exhibit himself as a prominent object of the highest homage upon earth. I ask if the whole of this great prophecy has not exactly been realised? What is the most conspicuous feature of the history of Europe but the spectacle of a man in the name of Christ claiming the highest authority, and lording it over the kings and governments of the earth? And what is the foundation upon which he rests but an extensive professedly Christian society in all the countries of Europe, which has nothing in common with the faith originally preached by the apostles? The mischief that led to this result had begun to work in the days of the apostles. Paul says to Timothy that a whole district had turned away from him (2 Timothy i. 15):—"This thou knowest that *all they which are in Asia* be turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes." According to John, the longest-lived disciple of Christ, the departure from apostolic principles had become so serious in his day that it was necessary to try every professor whether he was true or not. See 1 John iv. 1-7 for this. The history of European Christianity is not the history of a truly apostolic thing. Mr. Bradlaugh was not too fervid in his denunciations of the system which has cursed Europe for so many centuries. His mistake was to make the Bible responsible for that system, to the symbolic prediction of whose uprise and success I now call your attention. Revelation xvii. 1:—"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, 'Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness, and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; and upon her forehead was a name written Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.'" We are told in the 6th verse that John "wondered with great admiration," at the spectacle, and the angel explains to him the meaning of what he has seen. It is to that explanation I now call attention as furnishing the prophecy in question. First of all what is the meaning of the woman? and before we seek the answer to that, I would remind you that the community of Christ—those who are true to him and keep his commandments, are likened to a bride, a chaste virgin, espoused to an absent husband for whom she is waiting. Here, in the symbol before us, we have a false woman riding upon a scarlet-coloured beast. It is important to notice

this in preparation for the explanation which identifies a false church with the symbol. I hope Mr. Bradlaugh won't make fun of the scarlet-coloured beast, for I presume he does not despise the British Lion. Symbolism is appropriate in its place. If we have a more hideous symbol than the British Lion to deal with here, it is because we have a more hideous system represented. In the 18th verse, we have the answer as to who the woman is: "And the which thou sawest is *that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*" I am sure there will be no dispute between Mr. Bradlaugh and myself as to what city that was. Rome exercised imperial power over the whole world at that time.

MR. BRADLAUGH: No.

MR. ROBERTS: Over the whole civilised world. Rome is here represented as having ecclesiastical relations with the kings of the earth, which answers to history exactly. "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth"—Rome is on seven hills. "And there are seven kings: five *are fallen*, one is and the other is not yet come." The Roman symbol comprehended a representation of the seven forms of sovereignty that have been located on the seven hills of the topographical Rome. Up to the time of John's prophecy five forms of government had passed over those seven hills since the time of Romulus: the sixth (the imperial) existed at the time of the vision. The seventh prevailed for a short time, as the prophecy states, and the eighth, the Papal, is of the seven, for it is only another form for the Pagan; it is Paganism under a new name. I say that the history of Rome verifies in a marked manner these predictions of the apostles Paul and John. The complaint that the present system is a hideous system is well founded, but that complaint is an unwitting testimony to the truth of this great prediction. A religious apostacy, taking a political shape was to make all the nations of the earth drunk with false doctrine and sentiment; and the proof of its having accomplished this bemuddling mission is seen in the fact that when anyone attempts to present the sober truth of God, he is set down by religious people as an infidel or heretic.

MR. BRADLAUGH: On the first night of the debate, and again to-night, Mr. Roberts said he would contend that the prophecies of the Bible were so explicit, so sober and so useful in their character, being, in this respect, so unlike the vague, incoherent and irrational predictions of the Greek augurs, as of themselves to prove the divinity of the Bible. Sober! Useful! Explicit! If you have heard one word that has been either sober, useful or explicit, all I can say is you are a great deal more clever at listening than I am. There is one pretence of explicitness, and that is the case of Luke xxi., in which there is an "explicit" reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. But Mr. Roberts must have forgotten that the gospel of Luke was not written before Jerusalem was destroyed; but, on the contrary, there is not a particle of evidence of the existence of the gospel before A.D. 150, and the earliest is much later than that. Although he has the coolness to tell you that with respect to the ancient fathers, he was content to call witnesses, he could do without them. I remember that the truth of the evidence came from my side and not his. He pretended to hand his evidence from the fathers to the chairman, and then when I came to question him about them, they vanished into thin mist. On my part, I called as a witness Clement, and was told an idiot could give evidence like that. I called Justin Martyr; Mr. Roberts said he was "trashy." I thought so, too, and so on, with the others. Then he has quoted a prophecy from Hosea, forgetting that, during the dispersion and captivity of the Jews, the whole of their records were swept away, and swept away, too, because they were in the way. Then we had a reference to 2 Thess. ii., which Mr. Roberts had a very curious way of reading. Turning to the chapter, you will find that Mr. Roberts stopped at the word "coming," at the end of the 8th verse, though not a completed sentence. If he had read on he would find that "for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." I don't know whether it struck him as remarkably inconvenient, or whether he thought it rather too expressive. Certainly the reading was vague enough. He next brought you to the 17th chapter of the Revelations, with its filthily, disgusting language, which he hoped I would not turn into fun, but whose extreme filth was revolting in reading. The 4th verse it requires the height

of human audacity to read. There is nothing more revolting to my way of thinking. Mr. Roberts it cannot shock apparently. The woman had "a golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication." Is there abomination of language more filthy and disgusting in any book you ever read in the world? Mr. Roberts says that these prophecies of the Bible are explicit, are sober, are useful. Does this refer to such twaddle as women sitting upon waters and scarlet beasts, with so many heads and so many horns. I want Mr. Roberts to say if that revelation is explicit. It is simply not explicit; it is simply incoherent and irrational. Then he talks of John as the oldest living disciple of Christ. Where is there a particle of evidence of that? It is simply an impertinent assertion. He says that Mr. Bradlaugh is fond of figures of speech, or does not despise emblems, or something of that sort. I am fond of them, but I don't like filth, and the whole Bible is full of filth. In Hosea, Ezekiel, and Nehemiah it abounds, and the only way of regarding it is as the outcoming of an ignorant and barbarous age. Hosea seems to have entirely lost all sense of decency. Read, if you please, the second chapter. Mr. Roberts says they are not vague. If sober, they are irrelevant. "Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband; let her, therefore, put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with her thirst. I will not have mercy upon her children, for they be the children of whoredoms." I might read you filthy passage after filthy passage, but I don't like, especially in the presence of ladies. I have not provoked this. These are not our books. You say they are not vague. Perhaps not, sometimes, but they are not sober; and when explicit not useful. If they appeared in any book but the Bible, they would have been suppressed by the society formed for the suppression of indecent publications and seized wherever they were placed. (A VOICE "Shakespeare.") Shakespeare! Yes, but Shakespeare don't pretend to be a revelation from God to man. I will refrain from reading more of those texts. I should not have used the few I have at all, only I wanted to base what seemed to me an important argument upon them. From gross-minded people we get low figures; from degraded men we get degraded figures; from low people we get licentious arguments; from disgusting men we get disgusting figures. Such things could not have come from an all-wise God. I regretted for the sake of this meeting there was the slightest necessity for dealing with the subject. I can understand it must have been as painful to you as it is to me. But as you had brought before you an example of a horribly filthy passage, I was bound to show you to what such passages lead.

Let us, if you please, pass on to another part of the subject. The Assyrian slabs and Egyptian monuments we are told are not easily deciphered, and when deciphered are not useful. Mr. Roberts is of that opinion, and coming from him it is no doubt entitled to some weight, as my own knowledge is only second-hand, and I have no ability to translate the hieroglyphs of Egypt. Relying upon second-hand information, therefore, it is quite possible I may be misled, but as far as I have been able to follow these hieroglyphs, opinionous upon them vary much, and there is no perfectly safe ground for their interpretation. Until I know something more about them than I do at present I should say it would be better not to introduce them at all. Mr. Roberts says that at the end of the first century Rome was a great city reigning over all kings, and when I corrected him he said civilized kings. First, there is nothing about civilized kings in the Bible, and next Mr. Roberts might have known, if he had been explicit enough, that China was as civilized as the bulk of Europe and a portion of Hindostan. To pretend that this city of Rome reigned over all the kings of the world was as perfect a piece of pretence as could be imagined. Early in this debate Mr. Roberts said he would show that there was historic harmony in the Bible not only with the facts, but in relation to the history and the measure of the duration of the world. I pointed to the Egyptian chronicles and to the Septuagint. Is there historic harmony with these? The Bible limits the face of the earth to 6,000 years, while these go back far longer than that. The other day they opened some caverns in a neighbouring county and they found buried there remains which in the silent and increasing march of events, must have been deposited there when England and France were

united together, which must have been hundreds of thousands of years ago. Talk of harmony in hieroglyphics 15,000 years old! let Pangloss's discoveries speak—discoveries which show that Egypt existed 5,000 years before Eden's foolish story sounded in the world. There could be nothing more vague, nothing less sober, nothing more incoherent, nothing more irrational. What is the story? God makes one man and one woman, and places this man and woman in a garden, the fruit of one tree in which they were forbidden to eat. The tree was placed within reach and very tempting to the eye, and was, moreover, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. As long as man withstood the temptation all was well. But at length the serpent, wiser than the other beasts of the field, persuades the woman in her husband's absence to partake of the fruit. She does so, tempts her husband to do the same. He does so, and this caused the Almighty to turn round and curse the world. I am told that there is prophecy in it. The prophecy was contained in the curse pronounced upon the serpent:—"Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." That is supposed to be sober, explicit, and useful prophecy. To me it seems as vague, incoherent, and irrational as any that ever appeared in any language. Again, Mr. Roberts, in his first speech, said there were apparent contradictions and discrepancies, but that, when examined by himself, they would melt away one by one. I have given 150 of these discrepancies and contradictions and absurdities. How many of them has he tried to answer? He has referred to the sentiments running through the Bible as evidence of its divinity. Why! they are sentiments of which the readers of the Bible are beginning to be ashamed of. I have produced sentiments as to the treatment of women and training of children—sentiments of giving to men of one nation power over the liberties and persons of their neighbours—sentiments with respect to doctrines which, as good and true men, they must regard as immoral and barbarous—sentiments regarding the actions of immoral men, particularly David, the man "after God's own heart," who never went astray, and, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite, did right in the eyes of the Lord, but still stole a little, robbed a little, was a liar, a thief, and a tenfold scoundrel; and these are anomalies which Mr. Roberts has not attempted to explain.

The CHAIRMAN: I had hoped, after the experience of our first meeting, that weak-minded people who could not command their feelings would have stayed at home, and that egotistical people would have sent challenges of their own to the disputants against whose sentiments they wished to protest. The troublers are so much in the minority that I trust to the general sense of the meeting to keep them quiet, and to see that they shall have respect for the meeting. Do let us maintain order during the rest of the debate. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Bradlaugh will each occupy a quarter of an hour with the option of making a speech or of asking questions. Mr. Roberts will begin.

MR. ROBERTS QUESTIONS MR. BRADLAUGH.

If I understood you correctly last night, you do not say the New Testament is a collection of forged writings?—I said I did not hold the doctrine that the Bible as a whole was the work of forgers; that I held that the Bible, like other books, amongst much that was mythical, had a basis of truth round which the myths were centred.

May not Paul have existed and written the epistles if the New Testament is not a collection of forgeries?—You have given me at present no authentication of the letters you call Paul's, and therefore can base no question upon them.

My question is based upon your statement that the New Testament is not composed of forgeries. I ask if the New Testament was not forged, is it not an honest production?—I have given you an answer. There may have been those who contributed their own amount of what was false and while other parts may have a basis of truth.

Do you not admit—I make no admission whatsoever. I said last night the onus of proof lies with you.

I ask you to say finally whether the New Testament, or any portion of it was according to your conception of it, forged for the purpose of deceiving the people?—I don't mean to say that there might not be contributions and interpretations which may not be deceptions,

Do I understand you to say that of the 2nd Epistle of Paul to Timothy?—It all depends upon the evidence.

Presumably you know the evidence, and I am asking whether your answer applies to Timothy?—You are wrongly putting my answer. I have not the slightest evidence to enable me to identify any person whom you designate as Paul, or the person Timothy, to whom the epistle is said to have been written, and therefore am not unwise enough to express an opinion without having sufficient evidence:

Have you sufficient evidence to form an opinion—yea or nay?—I reply that I have no evidence of the fact.

What is your opinion of the fact?—My opinion is not evidence, and I have no facts to found an opinion upon.

You have the fact of the epistle existing and circulating for centuries, and upon that fact I ask for your opinion as to its genuineness?—It is my opinion that I have no evidence.

Do you refuse then to say that the 2nd Epistle to Timothy is a forgery?—If you mean, is it probable that Paul wrote it, my answer is that, as I have no knowledge about Paul, I cannot speak about his epistles, and I am not so foolish as to be drawn into the position of saying that a forgery had been committed, when I have no evidence on the subject.

Do I understand then that you know nothing about it?—I know more about it than you may suppose.

Tell me, then, is it a forgery?—The bulk of the evidence for it, I have no doubt, has been forged evidence.

I ask you for your opinion, and you tell me about the evidence.—The bulk of the evidence, during the first eight centuries, was forgery without doubt.

I am asking you about the 2nd epistle of Paul to Timothy.—And I cannot give any opinion apart from the evidence which I say has been forged—the bulk of it.

You evade my question: I ask you as to the 2nd epistle of Paul to Timothy; and you refer me to other writings. My question is, whether, in your opinion, on whatever ground you have formed that opinion, Timothy is a forgery?—I am of opinion, if you have *bonâ fide* evidence that Paul wrote it, the evidence should be produced.

I have now been asking you for some time, Mr. Bradlaugh, whether you believe that the 2nd epistle to Timothy was written by Paul, or is a forgery, and you do not answer the question.—I answer I know nothing about Paul. I have answered the question satisfactorily to myself. The evidence of the epistles—I have read the bulk of what is alleged to be evidence—and I believe it to be a forgery. Beyond that which is strict evidence, you will get nothing from me.

Say yes or no. Is it in your opinion Paul's letter or not?—I won't say that. You won't get me to go into a trap—(laughter). I have a letter in my possession—how can I tell whether a letter has been forged or no, when I don't know who wrote it.

I should say in such a case, "I am in ignorance of the entire matter, and cannot form an opinion," but I most certainly thought Mr. Charles Bradlaugh had formed an opinion, and I merely ask what that opinion is.—Your question began with a statement about ignorant persons. I say that I have examined the Christian evidence as cited by the whole of the writers, and the presumption formed in my mind is against the professions of the epistles, but I decline to be entrapped into saying what might convey more than I might mean.

My question is based upon the examination you have made. I merely ask, have you formed a definite opinion? if so, what is it?—I have given you a definite opinion.

What is it?—My definite opinion is that I have not the slightest evidence.

I ask your opinion, and you tell me about the evidence.—Apart from the evidence I have no opinion.

But you can tell me what your opinion is on the evidence.—My opinion is I am giving answers to a man who does not comprehend them.

All I wish you to do, Mr. Bradlaugh, is to take positive ground one way or the other as to the character of the second epistle of Paul to Timothy.—My opinion was expressed six days ago. My opinion is that you cannot connect Paul with it,

I ask you do you discover anything in the epistles themselves to justify the supposition that they were forged?—Yes, I have clear evidence, and if you examine the Christian evidences you will find that the titles to the Old and New Testaments have been held to be forged.

I am not speaking as to the titles.—I have not finished. I was saying that the ecclesiastical writers of the earlier ages used the names of people not connected with the book at all. I refer to the the titles distinguishing between them and the contents of the letters. There is nothing in the contents to show the authorship.

I can understand that a work may not be Charles Bradlaugh's though it has "C. Bradlaugh" affixed to it; but here we have in the body of the letter a statement like this: "Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ to Timothy," do you say that was not written by the writer of the letter?—I have not the slightest evidence connecting the writer of the prefix with the body of the letter,* and further than that I can give no answer.

MR. BRADLAUGH QUESTIONS MR. ROBERTS.

Do you admit my definition of life as applied to man?—I don't recollect what your definition was.

Do you mean seriously to tell me that you have forgotten my definition of life last night?—Yes, but if you will repeat it, I will tell you whether I agree with it.

Kindly tell me your ideas of life as applied to a man and as applied to an elephant.—I believe it is the same in both cases.

You have read Eccles. iii. 18?—Yes.

Mr. B., (reading:): "I have said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth the beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast; for all is vanity."—Yes, those words are there.

Do you think those words are God's authentic revelation to man?—Yes.

Do you consider that a sheep which has been killed by your butcher, of which you have eaten part, will continue to live despite that eating?—No.

Do you consider that a man who has been dined on by the Patagonians will continue to live despite that dining?—No: not unless he is raised.

Have you sufficient memory to serve you as to the plagues of Egypt?—Perhaps.

Is it a fact that God afflicted the land with a plague of murrain, which killed the whole of the cattle in the land, excepting the cattle of the children of Israel? I refer you to the 9th chapter of Exodus and the 6th verse. Is it the fact that after the whole of the cattle of the land had been killed, God, in the 19th verse, sent a warning so that those that were left might be taken out of the field, and not die?—I prefer you to read it as it is.

Does it say, in the 19th verse: "Send, therefore, now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them and they shall die?—Yes.

Is it a fact that some of them regarded the word and fled?—Yes.

Do you consider it probable that they fled away after they had been killed. Don't you consider that an improbability though the book states it?—The book does not state that.

Read it. Read all relating to the cattle fleeing out of the field, and see if it doesn't.—There is no occasion to read anything besides what you have read.

Is it true that later than that, God destroyed the firstborn of man and beast throughout the whole of the land of Egypt?—Yes.

All the cattle having been previously dead?—All that did die.

The words are: "And all the cattle of Egypt died." Read from the 2nd to the 6th verse, and say if it don't mean all the cattle?—It means all the cattle that were meant.

* The body of most of Paul's letters contain the expression, "I, Paul," frequently, e.g.: 2 Cor. x. 1.

How much less than "all?" Is not all the money in my pocket all the money?—That is a trifling way of putting it.

Can anything be trifling that helps to clear up God's Word?—In the abstract, of course not.

Then please clear up how all the cattle can mean less than all the cattle.—If I knew all the circumstances which the writer had before his mind, in their details, I could do so.

Oh, that is your answer, is it?—My answer is that the book, being otherwise proved reliable, my ignorance of the details does not preclude my believing it to be a divine revelation.

You said, last night, you had enough of evidence of the divinity of the book in the establishment of Christianity by miracle: is it not a fact that all people who pretended to perform miracles pretended to perform them by supernatural power?—No doubt.

Most of those who claim to perform miracles claim to do so by supernatural power? Yes, but to claim a thing is not to prove it.

Did I understand you to say that slavery as the injunction of Leviticus was justifiable? I think your statement was that savage people might be dealt with as animals?—I don't recollect my precise words.

You said they were in the position of animals, and that the Jews had a right to kill them.—God's right transferred to the Jews.

Does the Bible say that the serpent was condemned to go on his belly as punishment?—Yes.

Do you think that, before his condemnation, he went on his head, his tail, or his back?—I don't know.

And I am sure I don't—(laughter). Do you hold that, at some time in the history of the world, there was an actual tree bearing fruit, the eating of which would give a man education?—I must know in what sense you use the word education.

If you ask me, it means knowledge: "The tree of knowledge of good and evil:" was there such a tree?—Yes.

Do you think there are similar trees existing to-day?—No.

In your opinion, what has become of the genus?—It was not a genus.

Then what has become of the individual specimen?—I fancy it must have gone long ago.

So do I—(laughter). Will you kindly tell me how you make three days and three nights between late on Friday night and early on Sunday morning?—I don't make it.

Is it true, as the gospels represent, that Joseph of Arimathea begged the body of Jesus on Friday evening?—No.

When was it?—Thursday.

Where shall I find that?—In Luke xxiv.

In the 24th of Luke I don't see anything about Thursday. I know where it is written, "We trusted it had been He. Besides all this, to-day is *the third day*?"—"The third day *SINCE*;" consequently Saturday was the second day "*since*," and Friday the first day "*since*," and Thursday the day itself.

When it says that Joseph of Arimathea begged the body, according to the 23rd of Luke 50-54, it was in the evening, as "the Sabbath drew on?"—That was the Sabbath connected with the Passover. Two Sabbaths came together.

Will you kindly give two Sabbaths.—You will find it in Matt. xxviii. 1.

(Looks.) There is only one Sabbath mentioned in Matt. xxviii. 1.—The word is plural in the Greek. There is my Greek Testament (producing a book).

I have nothing to do with the Greek. We have agreed to take the authorised English version throughout. I asked, as my first question, if we were to be bound by the authorised English version, and it is simply a trick to refer to the Greek Testament when we have debated on the authorised version all through.—(Time called.)

The CHAIRMAN: We have only one hour left. Let us listen with the utmost quietness. Mr. Roberts now speaks for a quarter of an hour.

Mr. ROBERTS: I am surprised that Mr. Bradlaugh should insist on an English translation when the original is presented to him illustrative of a point referred to.

When he asked me to be bound by the English version, I did not understand him to exclude the original from which it is made. I understood him to mean the English version and its original, as distinguished from the Septuagint and other versions which are different. A version is the same in all the languages it may be translated into : the original of course governs all. With regard to Mr. Bradlaugh's remarks upon my opening speech, I am not quite sure whether I am right in giving him credit for sincerity in the disgust he expressed at the chapter I quoted. Not that I wish to dispute his sincerity in any offensive sense. I have no doubt that in measure he is sincere to his cause, but I cannot conceive any really thoughtful man objecting to Rev. xvii. on the ground of delicacy ; I cannot think of a better answer than the words of Paul, "to the pure all things are pure, but to the unbelieving and defiled nothing is clean." The Bible deals with facts ; and its unvarnished delineations of them is one evidence of its divinity. It is unhampered by human delicacies. If it has a bad thing to speak of, it speaks of it. If it has a bad thing to symbolise, it symbolises it in a character befitting it. Then Mr. Bradlaugh asks, why was not the book of Revelation written plainly ? I should like to ask him if even all human compositions are plain ? Are there not problems in Euclid, allegorical pictures, in paintings and hieroglyphs on stone ? Are there not emblems connected with the various secret orders ? All these might be considered as open to the same remarks, if Mr. Bradlaugh's objection is reasonable. But in point of fact it is not reasonable. Advanced matters are treated in an advanced way. You would not speak to educated men as you would to those you wished to instruct. The book of Revelation was written for a particular class. They are described in the opening verses as "the servants of Jesus Christ." Now the servants of Jesus Christ are instructed in first principles, and the principles furnish the clue to an interpretation of this book which they have in their hands. To them the book is intelligible and interesting. The knowledge it communicates is valuable to them and accessible. Its symbolical character is a veil only to those for whom its contents were never intended. With regard to historical correspondences, I acknowledge that Mr. Bradlaugh is right when he says I have not done what I said I would do ; I can only say my omission to do so is not from want of materials, but simply because it has been a matter of impossibility to introduce them during the time at our disposal. On some subsequent occasion I may take the opportunity of bringing them forward. To-night I have put forward some strong things, which so far Mr. Bradlaugh has entirely failed to answer. Perhaps, here, I may refer to his allusions to the discovery of human remains said to belong to times anterior to our own race. I would simply say that the discovery of such remains, even granting all that is claimed for them, would not be anything against the Bible because it is a teaching of the Bible that there was a race on the earth preceding the chaos which prevailed 6,000 years ago, at the time Adam appears on the scene. A disaster to the race occurred, probably resulting in the pre-Adamite chaos ; and the remains found may go back to that time without invalidating the Bible account of our own race. Our own race cannot be carried farther back than the Bible puts it. It is a simple mathematical calculation. Population increases at a known rate. Reckon the rate backwards and you cannot carry the present farther back than the time of Noah.

With regard to prophecy, I have produced the case of the Jews, and the case of the corrupt ecclesiasticism of Europe. I now refer to Isaiah's prediction of the downfall of Babylon (Isaiah xiii. 19) ; Ezekiel's prediction of the downfall of Egypt (Ezekiel xxix. 12-15) ; also his prediction of the destruction of Tyre (Ezekiel xxviii. 6-18), a power at that time occupying a great commercial position in the world, answering the position in the present day of Great Britain. Then I produce Daniel's prophecy of the uprise of the four empires (Daniel ii. and vii.) I cannot, in a quarter of an hour, elaborate these ; I ask you to refer to them at home and see whether or not these predictions are there. One particular illustration I will refer to, though involving the symbols which brings the jeer to Mr. Bradlaugh's lips. The date of the prophecy is B.C. 553, and the events to which it relates occurred about 300 years before Christ. Daniel saw in a vision a goat and ram with two horns, representing the empires of Persia and Greece, as the angel showing the vision told Daniel. The goat, representing Greece, had a great horn, which was broken in the encounter with the ram, and from the great horn there sprang up four smaller horns. This was explained to mean that, when the Greek empire should appear on the scene,

its first ruler would die, and his empire be divided into four parts outside his family. Now, we well know that, after Persia was conquered by Alexander, he died without issue, and his empire was divided among his four generals—a fact referred to in the 11th chapter of Daniel, thus:—"A mighty king shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, this kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside those." I dare say Mr. Bradlaugh, with his usual adroitness, will say that this is a forgery; but intelligent men are not to be scared away from truth by these reckless assertions. There are unquestionable matters of fact which lead logically to certain great conclusions, which may not possibly be apparent to every one, and which may be caricatured, but which are still undeniably true. Even in science this is the case. Some scientific experiments are so refined as to be only understood by few; and yet, conducted in a calm and skilful manner, yield demonstrated truth upon which great public conveniences are founded. I might refer on the subject of prophecy to the history of Christ, in so far as it was unfolded during the thirty-three years and a half he sojourned on earth. The time of his appearing, the character of his ministry, and the nature of his death, were all foretold with a minuteness which cannot be accounted for on any other principle than that the prophets were guided by the Spirit of God.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Roberts says he never meant it to be understood that we were to be bound, in this debate, by the ordinary English version. But I will remind him that, in my first speech, I said I should assume, for the purposes of this debate, that he meant the ordinary authorised English version, beginning with the Book of Genesis and ending with the Book of Revelation; and supposing I might happen to be wrong, I asked him if that was his meaning, and he said "Yes." It was the very first question I asked him: "Do you mean by 'the Scriptures' or by 'these Scriptures' the authorised English version of the Bible, commencing with Genesis and ending with Revelations?" Mr. Roberts's answer was "Yes." If that is not explicit language, language can have no meaning. If Mr. Roberts does not remember it, he ought never to enter into another debate. Then what does he say? He says that which positively I confess I cannot understand: that some version other than the English would distinguish a Sabbath preceding the Passover from the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, and that in fact there were two Sabbaths. Does he suppose I will admit that? He does not suppose anything of the kind. He says there is a Greek version. I know that. I have thirty of them at home; and I know that none of them I have yet seen speak of a second Sabbath or two Sabbaths. All the books I have seen speak of "the first day of the week." Then Mr. Roberts spoke about Mr. Bradlaugh's "class." I might mention Sir Charles Lyall as one of my class, Baron Bunsen, and there are a few more of my class; and as we have, amongst others, the evidence of these men, it is rather unfair to talk of Mr. Bradlaugh's class, because Mr. Roberts knows nothing about them. But with respect to the remains I spoke of, Mr. Roberts suggests that they might have belonged to a pre-Adamite period. In that case, the Bible is disproved; for it says Adam was the first man. We are told that the first man Adam was made a living soul. According to Mr. Roberts the first man was not the first man; and if there was a pre-Adamite man there is no truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to save the descendants of the first man. Then take the case of the prophecy of Daniel, the date of which Mr. Roberts gives as 553 B.C., and which he says relates to something which happened after that. He has proved nothing about the date of 553 B.C., although challenged over and over again to produce proofs of the dates he specifies. How dare he pretend that 553 B.C. is an accurate date? He might just as well have said twenty or a million, or any other date, but simply it suited his own purpose. It is about as funny a way of conducting a debate as anyone could adopt. Oh, Mr. Roberts says, but of course, Mr. Bradlaugh will say that this is a forgery. This word forgery is a convenient word, when wanting to describe in the future time what has already taken place. I might, in describing what would be the result of another quarrel, give a warning as to how the quarrel would begin. Unless you can tell me when Daniel was written you have no right to

claim it as a prophecy. Mr. Roberts cannot even show that it was not written after the event, and it is a deliberate impertinence to assume that upon which the whole argument turns. If you please, let me draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Roberts changes the whole course of things, and brings about a revolution of religious sentiment. He says that "to the pure all things are pure," and thereby justifies those people who are prosecuted for selling things which we say are not pure. There is no justification for a man taking a coarse and filthy way of stating a thing, when he might have taken a pure way of stating it.

We have now got near the end of this debate. One point upon which our friend has complained is that he has not had time to elaborate his arguments, but this might have been obviated if he had not read so many texts. He says that I have dealt with these things in a way that he won't criticise as unfair. In this case I did not come here—I never have come to any place—to plead for a foregone conclusion, regardless of what could be said on the other side. I have always been ready to listen to the arguments of an adversary. You will admit that I have met every point with distinctness and as directly as possible. If Mr. Roberts has not heard my explanation it is not my fault. To prove that this book is a revelation from God it seems to me absurd that a debate should be conducted solely in reference to its internal contents, without respect to its history outside. To answer me with a pile of texts is no answer at all. It is an admission that the spokesman has undertaken a task which he ought not to have undertaken at all. The jury to whom he has submitted the case during the six nights of the debate, have no evidence outside the book for any of the books of the Bible. For the Old Testament none exist, so far as Mr. Roberts knows; for the New Testament, a number of names have been given to you, Mr. Roberts carefully refraining, until pressed by me, from giving those names. When still further pressed on the subject, he had nothing practically to produce beyond the book. He certainly did quote Athenagoras with a pretence upon which I do not congratulate him. He fixed the date of Athenagoras at A.D. 180, but his witness never mentions one of the gospels or the names of their writers. This cannot be said to have sprung, as a mine, upon Mr. Roberts, because he had been challenged by me to produce his witnesses. He did so, but then discovered that they were "trash." When we come to the book itself, we have the statement from Mr. Roberts that the people of the world, with the exception of a few descendants of Abraham, were as animals, and that God had, no doubt, in mercy, justice, and love transferred them to the Jews for ever as bondsmen, and as the sport of their cruelty, lust, and pride—a position so terrible as to make any man shudder. I shall only have one further opportunity of addressing you. I am obliged to you for having treated me as you have. I beg, during the few minutes I have to speak, at any rate, to say that we have no other object than the common object of truth. Don't look upon our class as if it was few or weak. It is a growing class. It is a class increasing in influence with respect to the education of the day. It consists of those who have been struggling for the education of the country during the last fifty years. It is a class worthy of a better advocate than he who stands before you at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Roberts will now deliver his concluding speech for which he is to be allowed the full time.

Mr. ROBERTS: And now, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, we have reached the end of the discussion. It has not been so entirely satisfactory as might have been wished; but it has been as much so as was to be expected with the limited time at disposal and the broken form into which the discussion has necessarily been thrown. I, for one, am well content with the result. I have established a series of propositions which, in their combined force, place it beyond all reasonable doubt, that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation.

I have proved that, beginning where we stand, the state of the facts now existing in the world is such as ought to exist on the hypothesis that the Bible is true,

I have proved that there is in contemporary literature sufficient evidence of the fact of the Scriptures having existed at the time they profess to have begun to be in circulation, although admitting that such evidence is not necessary in the presence of the far weightier evidences of their divinity that exist.

I have proved that the unquestionable facts connected with the establishment of Christianity in the world in the first century, are incapable of being explained on any rational principle apart from the New Testament account that Christ rose from the dead, and that power to work miracles was bestowed on the apostles. I have proved that the single case of the apostle Paul, when all the facts of his unimpeachable history are distinctly realised and logically construed, is sufficient of itself to prove the divinity of Christ, and therefore of the entire Scriptures. I have proved that the literary and moral peculiarities of the Bible are at variance with the supposition of its being a human production, though this argument I have not had time to elaborate to the extent I should have liked. I have proved that the history of the Jewish nation, particularly as involving the character and career of Moses, cannot be explained on the Freethinker's hypothesis of the Bible; but on the contrary, is an irrefragable proof of its divine character and authorship.

And lastly, I have proved that the prophecies of the Bible—fulfilled in the past, and now fulfilling before our eyes—are an irresistible evidence of their divine character.

How have these arguments been met? Has there been any attempt to grapple with them on their merits? None whatever. Mr. Bradlaugh, instead of attempting to break the chain of my reasoning, has hurled at me, in his indiscriminating way, a number of detached features of Bible things, which he alleges to be contradictory of the professed character and teaching of the Bible. Even if his contention about them had been correct, their citation was no answer to the argument I have submitted. But what are we to say to them when they turn out to be mere points of *ex parte* declamation. Mr. Bradlaugh professes to find things in the Bible inconsistent with what he thinks God ought to be and to do; therefore these things are inconsistent with the God the Bible reveals. Extraordinary reasoning! I have disposed of some of his objections; and it will be on public record in this discussion that I offer at any time, in public contest with Mr. Bradlaugh, to answer or explain all that he can produce, when he will consent to affirm the Bible is an imposture, and so give me the opportunity of disproving the arguments he will advance in support of his affirmation.

Then he has endeavoured to embarrass me on the mere question of technical reference to writings whose existence is notorious to all the world. He knew that in one or two cases the name of a non-existent work was all that was relied upon as proving the existence of the New Testament at the date of that work's production; yet he insisted on the production of the work, while refusing to recognise the weight of those actually produced. It is immaterial to the purpose for which I used them whether they were really the works of their professed authors or not. They were written in the first and second centuries; it matters not by whom. They quote the New Testament many times over, which shows the New Testament existed at the time they were written, and this was all the use I sought to make of them. But I could have dispensed with them; the argument is irresistible without them. My reference to them only gave Mr. Bradlaugh an opportunity of appearing to advantage, which he would otherwise have lacked.

Well, I do not blame Mr. Bradlaugh for his tactics. They were the only tactics available to him in the discussion if he was to appear to show any fight at all. He could make

no headway against the overwhelming arguments in defence of the Bible. In the eyes of his friends he could not even appear to make a stand, except by giving to these irrelevant matters a prominence that does not logically belong to them. I will allow he has made a good handling of a very bad case.

But what does his contention amount to, even supposing we were for a moment to allow, for the sake of argument, that he had established what he has been contending for? Merely this, that he (Mr. B.), does not believe in the New Testament. It may be true for anything he knows to the contrary; he is inclined to think it is not true, but he cannot prove that is not so, and it is not his business! Is that a position with which a wise man ought to be content on a subject of such tremendous importance? Rather, will not the highest reason impel a man, in such a case, to seek for solid ground of conviction one way or other? A wise man will not be content with a "maybe" in such a matter as this. He will not rest till he is able to say with confidence, "I know this to be a forgery and a lie, for I can prove it," or "I know this to be the truth of God; for it is in my power to give conclusive evidence of it."

I have unfolded an argument during these six nights, imperfect and fragmentary though it be, which justifies a man in taking the second of these confident positions. I have shown by the facts accessible to all men, in connection with the Bible, that God exists, and that He has a glorious purpose with the earth and with man upon it, involving immortal life and perfect well-being to all who may become beneficially related in the way revealed by Christ. Is there no antecedent presumption in favour of such a conclusion, in our own constitution and in the spectacle of heaven and earth around us? Is it reasonable to suppose that the stupendous system of the universe exists for no higher end than the feeble gratification of an ephemeral and decaying race of animals? Is it reasonable to suppose that the aspirations of the noblest of mankind are without a counterpart in the region of the possible? Is it reasonable to suppose that the earnest uplifting of the human heart in agonising desire towards a Higher than man are without a meaning in the universe of being? The vibrations of the needle pointed to the pole long before the existence of such a point on the earth's surface was known. So, in true philosophy, do our fervent longings point to the Almighty Father and Disposer of all things, even if He had not chosen to reveal Himself.

The higher minds of the nation are on the side of my argument in an indirect way. Mr. Gladstone in his article on "Phases of Modern Thought," just published in the *Fortnightly Review*, has told us that in his judgment, the system of negation represented by Mr. Bradlaugh and his friends, is calculated, if generally received, to disintegrate society in the next generation, though its present advocates, through the bias of inherited principles, might continue subject to moral restraint. Professor Tyndall, in the preface to his published addresses, says that mankind require the lifting power of a noble ideal. Even John Stuart Mill, born and bred a sceptic, in his last days assumed an attitude indicative of something higher than his atheistic proclivities. The *Daily News* says "Mr. Mill was so far true to his early training that he tried hard to show how small was the intellectual warrant for the misty aspirations; but the 'Time-Spirit' led him again and again to the brink of the abyss after logic had made its final declaration; and his last book reveals him in the attitude of one looking across the ocean of eternity with wistful eyes and something of a fond expectancy. Thus he presents one of the most pathetic figures in all the literature of negation. His aspiration for something to believe in beyond this petty life will speak to doubting

intellects with intense force. He and such as he testify not that this age is sceptical, but that even sceptical minds *hunger for a religion in which they can believe*. The last century tried to feed the mind on the husks of dry and negative logic, but again has come that yearning for something higher, which has often before been the harvest of new faiths. When essentially scientific intellects like Mill and Tyndall link reverential hopes to strict deduction of the reason, the most careless observer may detect an immense transformation of opinion, and the most timid heart may take comfort."

All these utterances of the intellectual men of our day, point in the direction of a need which the Bible supplies. The Bible gives us the purifying and reforming restraint which Mr. Gladstone sees human society needs. It gives us a divine interdict of evil doing and a divine command of well-doing. The Bible gives us the uplifting ideal of professor Tyndall's declared want. It gives us an ideal glorified man—the manifestation of the Eternal invisible Father of all—a man who once lived in our weak and afflicted state, whose work has already filled the world with light compared with the darkness that reigned before his appearance; a man who now exists in an incorruptible, immortal, omnipotent nature; whose re-appearance in the world will take place at an appointed time for the abolition of every existing form of human government, and the establishment of a divine despotism for the blessing of all mankind, on the foundation of glory to God, to whom alone glory is reasonably due; with whose appearance there is associated this glorious prospect for every friend of his, that he will use the power God has given him to recall them from the oblivion of the grave, or transform them to an immortal state identical with his own, and associate them with himself, with every circumstance of honour and renown, in the perfect order of things he will establish and administer among men in that blessed day of promise, when there shall be no more curse and no more pain, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. A more uplifting ideal it is impossible to conceive; and as for poor John Stuart Mill's wistful wonderment of the future, the gospel of Christ is the satisfactory and the only answer. There is no solution apart from it. There is no consolation to the intellectual mind apart from it. It gives the believer of it a permanent interest in the universe and its affairs. It takes away the blackness which darkens and shortens the Atheist's horizon; it dispels the fear, the *ennui*, and the gloom, which, at some time or other, invade every man's thought, and rescues him from that depressing companionship with fossils and death which Mr. Bradlaugh's faith compels him to accept; and gives him instead a fellowship with the Almighty through His Son, and a destiny as glorious and endless as the sun itself.

A knowledge of the truth puts its possessor in the privileged position of being able to explain the conflicts that distract the intellectual world, and to see his way through the labyrinth where others are lost. He turns his back on the priest and preacher, as the scientist does: but he grasps the Bible to his bosom, as the scientist does not, having in the understanding of it, attained to the possession of a religion that he can believe in, without closing his ear to science like the dogmatist, or to the voice of Jewish historic evidence like the scientist—a religion which solves the problem of human existence, mellowing the present with the tranquillity of faith, and gilding the future with the brightness of well-founded and rational hope. This is truly a great possession, the value of which is enhanced by the foregoing newspaper picture of intellectual unbelievers looking (vainly) across the ocean of eternity with wistful eyes. Christ is the solution of all anxiety in this direction, and he is to be obtained in the belief and obedience of the truth. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

I admit the glory of it has been obscured by a false theology, whose hideousness is due to a mixture of the philosophical speculations of ancient Pagans with the fables of Romish priests, glossed by the thinnest varnish of Scripture phraseology. I admit that, for this reason, men like Mr. Bradlaugh are more to be pitied than blamed. I do pity him. In some respects I like him. And I would tell even him to hope; for the Creator of heaven and earth is gracious and forgiving, and will forgive even blasphemies equal to his, if he will turn and repent and submit himself as a dutiful child to the Everlasting Power, in whose hand his breath is, and whose are all his ways. But he may not hope if he does not repent. Though the reigning darkness of Christendom may excuse him, and his courage and manliness may extenuate the blacker features of his case, the truth compels every friend of it to regard him as a misleader of men to their utter ruin both now and hereafter. In this character I have, at the request of the truth's friends, accepted the present opportunity of strenuously opposing him, in the proof that the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I have elected not to occupy your time beyond ten o'clock in allowing Mr. Roberts to proceed with his prepared speech, and shall, I think, be able to limit myself to eight minutes, if allowed to proceed free from interruption. First, I regret that Mr. Roberts, in his written *finale*, should have said that he has produced contemporary evidence. It is not true, as Mr. Roberts has said, that my tactics were directed to irrelevant matters, for had they been irrelevant, I should not have introduced them. I regret that he only relied upon titles and names; and the report will bear me out that he said he had the books here, and that I challenged their production. He says my position is that the New Testament may be true for anything I know to the contrary. On the contrary, I have given contradictions which show it cannot be true. I regret also that Mr. Roberts should have referred again to the challenge thrown out last night. I had been taught to regard him as the representative of an earnest body of men and women, but I must refuse to accept a second challenge from a man who is incompetent to make out the case he has undertaken to establish. Mr. Roberts says I ought to put it to you that this book is a forgery and a lie, or accept it. Surely I have taken pains to explain to you that I regard the Bible as I do the religious books of every people in the world—none of them entire forgeries, none of them entire lies; all of them the growth of different ages; all of them with a little truth. I have studied them, and if I cannot receive them, it is only because my reason does not permit of my doing so. I am not the best man that could be put forward against them; but I hope you will do me the justice of allowing that whatever may be our differences, I gave a full and a fair hearing to whatever is advanced in their favour, and as full an answer as I am able to give, and so it shall be every time a cause is entrusted to my charge.

I have now the pleasant duty to perform to ask you to pass a vote of thanks to the gentleman, who with so much good temper and so much firmness, has presided over these debates. With this I am sure Mr. Roberts will agree.

MR. ROBERTS: I second the motion, only regretting that Mr. Bradlaugh and myself cannot agree on higher things. I feel pleasure in joining in this proposition because I

believe the good temper and impartial conduct of the chairman has greatly tended to the success and dignity of the debate. I might add as a reason for the vote what may not be known to all, that the chairman has postponed his summer holidays in order to attend to the unsummerlike duty he had undertaken, to preside over this debate.

The resolution was carried with acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN in responding to the vote, said he had listened with great interest to the debate, and had learnt some things from it. There had been some warmth on each side, but not more than might have been expected on such a subject with such earnestness of conviction on each side. He considered that the disputants were both wrong and both right, and if the audience would only come next Sunday to the Chapel where he preached (loud and prolonged laughter), he would try to show them the way in which these things should be looked at.

The meeting then separated.

A REVIEW OF THE DISCUSSION.

BY MR. ROBERTS.

MR. ROBERTS has asked and obtained Mr. Bradlaugh's consent to the publication of this review of the discussion at the end of the published report. He has also offered to print along with it any rejoinder Mr. Bradlaugh may choose to write, but Mr. Bradlaugh has not chosen to write a rejoinder. The addition of a review of the discussion by one of the disputants will seem uncalled for and out of place to such as hold with Mr. Bradlaugh that the discussion should stand or fall on its own merits. If Mr. Roberts could limit his view to the discussion as a performance or trial of polemical skill between two men, he would be of the same mind. But this aspect of the case is to him of the least consequence. He cannot shut his eyes to the wider bearings of the affair, as affecting, in however small a degree, the convictions of those who may seek in the reading of this discussion, some acquaintance with the merits of the question debated. This to him is the only important phase of the reported discussion, and has led him to desire and to ask permission to supplement the discussion with a few things necessary to complete the consideration of the subject.

Six nights seems a long time, and long enough to exhaust the subject, or at all events to allow of a very adequate treatment of it. But in the practical working, the case was otherwise. Each disputant had only one hour and a quarter per night, and part of that devoted to interrogation. Even with a full and undisturbed occupation of that time, any one having any acquaintance with the subject will know how small an extent of ground could be covered in an hour. But when it is remembered that a half of that hour was broken into two separate speeches, in reply to speeches from the other side, it will at once be seen that half-an-hour was practically all that was at the disposal of the affirmative side for the elaboration of lines of thought involving really extensive treatment, if at all thoroughly done. The consequence was that the affirmative argument was imperfectly developed, while on the other hand, it was absolutely impossible to deal with a great portion of the hostile details marshalled so rapidly, and on the whole so skilfully (for a bad cause) on the other side.

To make good the deficiency arising from these causes, Mr. Roberts proposed to Mr. Bradlaugh a second discussion, in which Mr. Bradlaugh should affirm the mythical character of the Scriptures which would have given Mr. Roberts the opportunity of following all his objections, but this Mr. Bradlaugh declined. Consequently, Mr. Roberts's only other course is to add this review, which he thanks Mr. Bradlaugh for consenting to. For convenience sake, the review is divided into six parts, corresponding with the six nights of the debate; and each part into two sections.—1, the affirmative, and 2, the negative.

FIRST NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT.

The first night may be found somewhat ineffective on the affirmative side. This was due to a cause that could not be appreciated by listeners. It could only be known thoroughly to the speaker himself. A word or two will make it intelligible. Mr. Roberts is in the habit of speaking *extempore* in the absolute sense. But in meeting a man like Mr. Bradlaugh, he felt he must make some degree of preparation. Yet could not prepare to the extent of getting ready speeches verbatim. He had to limit himself to notes. The consequence was that, hampered by notes and not having speeches by heart, he had neither the advantage of complete preparation on the one hand nor the impromptu freshness on the other. This disadvantage was aggravated by the embarrassment natural to meeting an able man for the first time, of whom he had not yet taken the measure, and of commencing the discussion in a large strange hall. The result was that what preparation had taken place was not fully utilized, while the argument put forth lacked the completeness and force that an *extempore* effort would have had.

The importance of the first night's argument will only be appreciated by those with whom the question of the Bible's divinity is a matter of anxiety. By such the argument will be felt to be a vital one and satisfactory. It supposes a man anxious to satisfy himself as to the truth of the Bible. Such a man has it in his power to apply various tests; but obviously the first one is that which relates to what he actually sees and knows for himself. He is living in the world to which the prophecies of the Bible relate. He knows what are the leading features of the affairs of mankind as they now exist. Hence, he can apply an immediate and palpable test of a precise and crucial kind. If it could be shown that the state of things now existing is what ought not to exist according to the Bible, the inquirer would feel that it was needless to proceed another step in the investigation. On the other hand, if it can be shown that the state of things now existing is exactly what ought to exist, according to the Bible, every one instinctively feels that that is a powerful fact in its favour, and one in fact which almost of its own force proves its divinity. Hence this enquiry is of great consequence in the consideration in question. Mr. Bradlaugh made light of it, and tried as much as possible to conceal its importance from view. But the fact remains that the two great features of the present situation of human affairs are what the Bible requires—the existence and dispersion of the Jews, and the dominant existence in Roman Europe of a political ecclesiasticism, founded on a corruption of apostolic Christianity.

The following are portions of Mr. Roberts's notes, unused in the discussion. The substance of some of them may appear in certain parts of the discussion, but not in this form:—

"The proposition I have to maintain, joyful if true. It lights the horizon with the morning glow of hope, while Mr. Bradlaugh's position is the reverse. Mr. Bradlaugh would extinguish the historic light of Bethlehem. He asks us to believe there is no hope. He would overwhelm us with dreary despair. He would take from us God, and ask us to regard our being as the accidental development of callous force, indiscriminating, unknowing, unconscious, unloving, helpless law, which has brought us thus far, but will not and cannot take us farther. He inscribes the skull and crossbones on his banner, and holds up to us the coffin as our goal.

"I am here to maintain that, in the strict sense, the question is not an open one: not one admitting of a doubt, when the evidence in its entirety is realised. Doubts there always are in some minds; but this is no argument against the truth. Doubt may be the mere result of ignorance of the facts, or incapacity to discern the logical result of facts, or aversion to fairly open the mind to that result.

"The proposition I have to affirm stands on a very broad foundation. It is not a theory depending upon correctness in the process of induction. It is not the question of an isolated historical incident, depending for its credibility upon circumstances easily capable of distortion or suppression. It is not even a matter of creed in the ordinary

sense, depending upon modes of reading and argument. It is a great and broad historical matter, embracing in its foundations, current, existing facts; the attested history of mankind, and the known characteristics of human nature in a hundred generations.

"I will show that the truthfulness and divinity of the Bible are shown by every test that can be applied to it.—1. By the facts that ought to exist at the present moment on that hypothesis. 2. By external testimony to its existence in ancient times. 3. By its correspondence with the known history of mankind. 4. By its internal constitution and peculiarities. 5. By the nature of its histories, and 6, by the fulfilment of its prophecies.

"I am not unaware that much may be said against these propositions; but this fact is no disparagement of their truth. Where is the matter, person or thing against which ingenious hostility cannot say something? It is a true proverbial saying, that there are two sides to every question—not that there are two real sides, but two ways of arguing it. Cases in court every day furnish an example. But truth exists for all that.

"It is not an uncommon thing to assume a theory of a matter, and to hammer everything into harmony with that theory, with however much violence to truth. Somebody must have done this in the Tichborne Case. Somebody does it in the present question. You will judge on which side this process is resorted to. I know a gentleman of Mr. Bradlaugh's persuasion, who on board the *Aleppo*, being cornered on the evidences of Christ's resurrection, said he would not believe in that resurrection, though he could not dispose of the evidence, because the resurrection was contrary to his experience!

"The plan to work by is to lay hold of what is unquestionably true, and decide all doubtful points in accordance with these. We shall have doubtful matters urged against the Bible. I shall undertake to grapple with and explain these in harmony with the views I present, while, on the other hand, I know it is impossible for the opposing side fairly to dispose of the positive evidences in favour of the truthfulness of the Bible.

"The difficulties against which the argument for the Bible has to contend may be called artificial difficulties—not real, but easily raised with telling effect where ignorance exists, such as 1, the history of Papal Europe; 2, the nature of orthodox doctrines; 3, misconception of Bible teaching; 4, natural sympathy with unbelief.

I.—If the Bible is true, there ought to be Jews now in existence, because besides the evidence adduced in Mr. Roberts's first speech on the sixth night of the discussion, it is written (Jer. xxxi. 36): "If those ordinances (of heaven and earth) depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall *cease from being a nation before me* for ever." The existence of the Jews is a fact which is known to all the world.

"If the Bible is true there ought to be extant in the earth a corrupt Christianity, as the basis of the political system of Roman Europe, maintained by the kings thereof; because such was foretold to be the final form into which the community established by the apostles would grow, and it was also foretold that the system so developed would continue in existence and power till the re-appearance of Christ. Proof as follows:—

I.—APOSTASY PREDICTED.

- 1.—Acts xx. 29: After my (Paul's) departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
- 2.—2 Tim. ii. 16: Shun (O, Timothy) profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker.
- 3.—2 Tim. iii. 13: Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.
- 4.—2 Tim. iv. 3: The time will come when they (Christians—see context) will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

- 5.—2 Peter ii. 1-2: There shall be false teachers *among you*, who *privily* shall bring in damnable heresies. . . . And *many shall follow their pernicious ways* by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of; and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.
- 6.—2 Thess. ii. 3: That day shall not come except there come a *falling away first*, and that man of sin be revealed who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. . . . The Mystery of iniquity doth already work.
- 7.—1 John ii. 18: Antichrist shall come.

II.—THE PREDICTED APOSTASY BEGUN IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

- 1.—2 Thess. ii. 7: The mystery of iniquity *doth already work*.
- 2.—2 Tim. i. 15: This thou knowest that all they which are in Asia *be turned away from me*.
- 3.—1 John ii. 18: Even now are there many antichrists.
- 4.—1 John iv. 1-5: Many false prophets are gone out into the world . . . and the world heareth them.

III.—THE PREDICTED APOSTASY TO CORRUPT ALL NATIONS.

- 1.—Rev. xvii. 1-3: The inhabitants of the earth made drunk with the wine of her fornication.—(that is with the teaching of Rome—see last verse of the chapter.)
- 2.—Rev. xiv. 8: She made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
- 3.—Rev. xviii. 3: All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
- 4.—Rev. xix. 2: She did corrupt the earth with her fornication.

IV.—THE PREDICTED APOSTASY TO BE IN EXISTENCE AT THE SECOND APPEARING OF CHRIST.

- 1.—2 Thess. ii. 8: Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy *with the brightness of HIS COMING*.
- 2.—Rev. xvi. 15-19: Behold I (Jesus) come as a thief. . . . And Great Babylon (that is Rome—see xvii. 18) came in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.
- 3.—Dan. vii. 9-11: The Ancient of Days did sit . . . and the judgment was set and the books were open. And I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake, I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame.

Europe is Roman-ecclesiastical at the present moment—consequently the existent state of things is what the truthfulness of the Bible requires. If the world had been Pagan, as it was when the apostles died; or in a state of enlightened and faithful subjection to the teachings of Christ, this would have been an argument against the Bible.

External evidence of the authenticity of the New Testament.—The collateral testimony to the existence of the Bible at the time it professes to have been produced, is beyond reasonable dispute. As regards the New Testament, there is the uncontradicted tradition of the Christian community from the very beginning, which, on examination, will be found to carry more weight than even the express testimony of individual witnesses. The New Testament is mainly composed of the epistles of Paul, addressed not to persons but to churches. These letters were preserved and read habitually by the various churches to whom they were addressed, which is the best evidence of authenticity that could be produced. Besides being preserved and read by these, they were copied and circulated among all the Christian communities.

They were equally used in Alexandria, and Carthage, and Gaul. They are cited by the writers of the second century as commonly and familiarly as by preachers and writers in our own day. The uncontroverted writings of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement, and Alexandrinus prove this; and the fact is conclusive evidence of their previous currency for a long time, and establishes their authenticity by proving them to have been received by the very communities to whom Paul's letters were severally addressed in the first instance. No demonstration could be more complete than this. It is not in the least affected by the fact that literary forgeries were abundantly perpetrated in the second and third centuries. These forgeries only go to show that there were genuine writings in existence, commanding the confidence and influencing the lives of the Christian community from the very commencement of its existence. The forgeries are, therefore, indirect evidence in support of the authenticity of the New Testament.

Being authentic, the nature of the contents is evidence of their divinity. The contents would be evidence of divinity, even if the authenticity were in doubt.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

Mr. Bradlaugh says, on page 6: "I do not pretend that at any particular date, some class of ignorant and designing men forged a whole book which they called the Bible, for the purpose of deceiving the people: such would simply be an absurd contention." He also says: "I have never contended . . . that the whole of this Bible is the work of ignorant and designing men." This concession is an indication of the strong position of the Bible with regard to the evidence of its being a genuine production. If Mr. Bradlaugh could have affirmed that the Bible was the work of ignorant and designing men, he would not have scrupled to do so. He says he does not do so, and has never done so. Consequently, on the testimony of its bitterest foe, the Bible is the work of enlightened and candid men, for that is the opposite of ignorant and designing. If the Bible is the work of enlightened and candid men, it is a reliable witness to the innumerable facts which it testifies. The facts are, therefore, true; and consequently, the Bible is the reliable record of divine revelation; because its record embraces the constant testimony of God having spoken the things recorded and done the things described; *e.g.*, the crossing of the Red Sea; communications to Moses on Sinai; the resurrection of Christ, &c.

Mr. Bradlaugh says a book in which there are "contradictions on the surface" and admitted "difficulties and obscurities," cannot be a record of divine revelation. This is plausible but not true. The logic of the argument is not apparent unless it be this: "I, Mr. Bradlaugh, have an idea what a divine revelation ought to be, and it is not possible that anything can be a divine revelation which differs from my idea of it. The Bible differs from my idea of what a revelation ought to be, therefore, it is not a divine revelation." This would be plain reasoning, but even Mr. Bradlaugh, with all his assurance, would not like to be guilty of it in this form. Yet this is what his argument amounts to. If this is not the argument, there is nothing in it. On what other principle can he contend that the existence of difficulties in the Bible is an evidence of its untruth? The fact of the difficulties in reality works the other way. The Bible does not profess that God has made His way as plain as the shining of the sun. On the contrary, He has concealed wisdom, and made it difficult of attainment, that the intellect of His creatures may be stimulated and developed. Thus we are told to "search for wisdom as for hidden treasure."—(Prov. ii. 4.) Further, that it is "the glory of God to conceal a thing, and the honour of kings to search out a matter."—(Prov. xxv. 2.) More than once we read, "Here is wisdom: let him that hath understanding" do so and so. The whole Mosaic economy was an enigma.—(Heb. ix. 9; x. 1.) The gospel contained a mystery hid from the beginning.—(Rom. xvi. 25.) Christ spoke in parables that the scornful ruling class might not understand.—(Mark iv. 11-12.) These things are testified in the Scriptures; if, therefore, we are to judge the Scriptures by their own professions, it is a circumstance in their favour that there are "difficulties and obscurities."

The same principle is observable in nature—the workmanship of the Being who revealed Himself to Moses. The precious metals are hidden: the earth has to be mined

to get at them. Valuable results are got at through difficulty. Coal, and gas, and drainage, and useful articles are not come at without skill and labour and patience. We have not obtained the convenience of rail and telegraph without a vast amount of patient application and difficulty. The Bible is in harmony with nature in this respect. We err if we judge it by any theory of our own as to what it ought to be. Our business is to take it as it stands, and adapt ourselves to it wisely as in natural things. To fall out with the Bible because it differs from our idea of what it ought to be, is foolish. We might as well fall out with our own existence because we have to take the trouble to eat, and in most cases to procure our food and do many other things with difficulty.

But Mr. Bradlaugh says the Bible contradicts itself. If this were really so in the serious sense required by Mr. Bradlaugh's argument, it would doubtless be fatal to the claims of the Bible as a whole. It would not prove that some things in it might not be of God, though contradicted by some things in it that might be of human addition. It would, however, prove that the Scriptures as originally delivered had been corrupted and might therefore raise a difficulty as to which part was to be received with confidence and which rejected. But in point of fact the contradictions alleged by Mr. Bradlaugh does not exist. They are appearances of contradiction merely, which disappear on close investigation. This is no unusual thing in truth. Everyday life makes us familiar with constant illustrations of two apparently opposite statements, being both true and reconcileable. Minds not careful to ascertain truth, can find in every day occurrences abundant materials for captious telling criticism: but it is possible, for the candid mind to steer a safe course through intricacies of an apparently conflicting character, and arrive at the possession of truth. This is the case with the Bible, where appearances of contradiction exist which Mr. Bradlaugh turned to the most advantage.

Mr. Bradlaugh referred to Numbers xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29, and Matt. iii. 6, setting forth

GOD'S IMMUTABILITY.

- I.—"God is not a man that He should lie, nor the Son of Man that he should repent." 2.—"The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for He is not a man that He should repent." 3.—"I am the Lord: I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

In juxtaposition with these, he placed 2 Kings xxi. 1-5; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; Gen. vi. 6, and 1 Sam. xv. 11, which he contended were illustrations of

GOD'S CHANGEABLENESS.

- 1.—"Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live . . . I have heard thy prayer. . . . I will add unto thy days fifteen years." 2.—"The Lord repented Him of the evil" 3.—"It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth." 4.—"It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king."

And upon these Mr. Bradlaugh argued there was a clear contradiction. But there is none to those who realise that there are two aspects in which God's actions, like man's actions, are to be considered, first in so far as they depend upon himself, and secondly in so far as they conditionally depend upon the actions of others. The first three texts affirm the steadfastness, in the sense of non-fickleness, of any purpose the Almighty may form, when the stability of that purpose depends upon Himself alone. The last three intimate a change of purpose consequent on a change of the conditions in others upon which the purpose was based. This distinction is actually affirmed Jer. xviii. 7, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning kingdom to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, *I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*" There is no conflict between personal steadfastness of purpose and readine of adaptation to changed circumstances. The difference between a stable and unstable man illustrates the point in some degree. The one can always be relied upon under given circumstances; and the other not at all. But the steadiness of the stable man does not consist in a propensity to adhere with mulish pertinacity to plan

without reference to their propriety ; but in the disposition to steadily follow a certain course of action, so long as that course of action is wise. To continue in the course when circumstances have so altered as to make that course unwise, would be evidence of stupidity and not of stability. To alter the course when the circumstances dictating it have altered, is no evidence of inconstancy or instability. The stability of a wise man shows itself in steadily pursuing one end, and adapting himself to every change in circumstances that might prevent him reaching his aim ; like the captain of a vessel who has to shift his sails a hundred times in a voyage, and tack in many different directions to reach the port of destination. The contrast to this would be the man at sea who determined to keep his sails as they were, whatever wind should blow. The first man will be found in a certain port at last, weather permitting ; but the other you will never know where to find.

Now, in effect, the declaration of the first three passages concerning God is, that He is more stable than any sea captain that ever put foot on a quarter deck ; that His purposes, where they depend only upon Himself, are immovable and unchangeable absolutely ; that anything resting on His word is more certain and secure than the everlasting hills ; that He is, in His nature, the highest reason and most steadfast of purpose ; that the principles upon which He acts are absolutely unchangeable ; that nothing like wanton change or fickleness is possible in Him. But this is not inconsistent with the fact that He adapts Himself to circumstances as they arise in the evolution of His purpose. The human race, in the first instance, turned out differently from His desire. He intended them to be obedient, and was working with them on this basis. They became disobedient, and (after much patience) with the alteration in the conditions upon which the original intention was based, He alters His intention, and gives them up as hopeless. Saul is chosen on the understanding that obedience is the basis of favour. Saul disobeys, and God repents (or changes His mind) with reference to his selection as king. This is not inconsistent with the unchangeability of the principle on which He acts. What would be thought of a stable captain who should allow a mutinous officer to continue in his place ? The captain would put him in irons, and would not, thereby, sacrifice his character for stability, but contrariwise would establish it.

When it is seen that the first set of passages have (as the context will show) reference to God's sovereign purpose, while the second set refers to intention dependent upon the condition of others, the appearance of "contradiction" disappears.

Next with regard to the character of God, Mr. Bradlaugh refers to Ex. xxxii. 7, 14, and asks whether we are there to find a divine representation of it : "Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them (Israel) that I may consume them." This is addressed to Moses, who was interceding with God for Israel, who had grievously offended in turning to idolatry while Moses was in Sinai. Mr. Bradlaugh would contrast it with the New Testament declaration, "God is love," and contend there was a contradiction ; but there is no force in the argument, unless it can be shown that two qualities or attributes cannot co-exist in the same character. Mr. Bradlaugh himself would not pretend that this can be shewn. It is a matter of everyday experience that a benevolent man may be capable of great anger if circumstances call for it. Mr. Bradlaugh may say, "But God is not a man." True ; but we can reason from the small to the great. If created man is capable of both love and anger without inconsistency, there can be no true objection to the Bible representation of God in both aspects. It is expressly testified (and in the New Testament too) not only that He is love, but that "He is a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29) ; where also (x. 31) it is said "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." If we are to judge of the consistency of the Bible revelation of God, we must take all parts of it, and not leave out one or elevate one at the expense of another. The philosopher (who after all is a very ignorant person as regards the primary force of the universe) may smile at the idea of God being capable of anger, but he can show no reason against it. Nature, of which he can give no account, except that it is, shows destructive forces and performs destructive operations, and what objection can there be to the analogue of this existing in the first cause ? The creator of the eye can presumably see ; and the creator of the impulse of anger can presumably show it in a higher form than we know it. There is no inconsistency in the revelation of the divine character. If anger is shown, it is never without a cause, and the cause is

always to be found in things that frustrate the objects of love. Divine love without divine energy to destroy things that would work against it, would be a weak and incomplete character. There is perfect symmetry in the divine character when all its parts are taken in. But, of course, if you disconnect manifested wrath from the circumstances that evoke it, and from the ultimate objects which its manifestation proposes, you exhibit an unintelligible and ugly thing. By a similar treatment of the modest man's anger, it would be possible to show him a tyrant. But this is neither a skilful nor a faithful treatment of the subject. God angry with sin is not an ugly but a beautiful picture, when seen in connection with the evil results of sin and the perfection of divine love, where the divine wisdom and authority are accepted as a law of action.

But there is another consideration to be taken into account in connection with the transaction at Sinai, which becomes specially appropriate in looking at another of the alleged contradictions, viz., the statement that Moses and the elders of Israel saw God (Ex. xxiv. 9-11), and the statement in John i. 18, that "No man hath seen God at any time." The consideration is that the term God does not always mean the Creator *in propria personæ*. While the Pentateuch tells us that God spoke to Moses at the bush, it explains that the medium of communication was an angel (Exodus iii. 2, 6), which is supported by the New Testament.—(Acts vii. 30.) It records that Jacob saw God face to face, yet the actual personage seen was an angel.—(Hosea xii. 4.) Jehovah, we are told, rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire, yet the narrative shows the actual operators in the case were angels.—(See Gen. xix.; compare the following verses—1, 14, 22, 24.) The same thing appears many times; and the case of Moses on Sinai is no exception, for we are expressly informed, in Acts vii. 38, that it was an "angel which spoke to Him in the Mount Sinai;" and, in the 53rd verse, that the law was given "by the disposition (or ministration) of angels." In the light of this, there is nothing inconceivable in the proposition that seems to startle Mr. Bradlaugh; the difficulty exists in the want of information, and not in the subject itself. That the name of God should be identified with angels may, at first sight, appear a little confusing; but the difficulty vanishes when we recognise the fact illustrated in Ex. xxiii. 21 ("I send mine angel: obey his voice, for MY NAME is in him"), that angels engaged specially in the service of the Creator bear His name. "They do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word."—(Psalm ciii. 20.) They act as the instruments of His power; but the connection between their acts and His authority is maintained in the use of the singular verb, with (their) plural nominative—a grammatical anomaly, explained by the fact that one power operates through a plurality of agents.

It is another difficulty with those who think with Mr. Bradlaugh, that God should write with His finger (Ex. xxiv. 12; xxxii. 16); but, in view of the fact that angels are actually signified, there is no difficulty. The angels are spirit (Psalm civ. 4), and spirit is taught by the Bible to be the substratum of all substance, pervading all space.—(Psalm cxxxix. 7.) What difficulty would there be to an angel possessing control of this permeating energy in tracing with his finger on stone, characters which, in consequence, should be deeply graven there? The accomplishments of electric science should teach us that there are higher possibilities in heaven and earth than even philosophers dream of, and point to higher developments of power and intelligence than it is permitted frail mortals to experience.

Then stress is laid on the so-called discrepancies between the two versions of the Decalogue.—(Ex. xx.; Deut. v.) It is usual to speak as if the existence of the differences constituted a difficulty in the way of receiving either, but much attention to the matter is not needed to perceive the fallacy of the suggestion. If there were even serious differences between the two accounts, they would not, in the presence of all the evidence, disprove that God gave the law from Sinai; for while one account (that of Exodus) is, so to speak, the official and exact record of what transpired at Sinai, the other is part of an historical *résumé* orally delivered by Moses forty years afterwards, in which correctness of fact was of more concern than exactness of words. Verbal variations between such a rehearsal and the original deliverance are natural; but the variations are slight indeed; much more so than might have been expected. The language, in both cases, is nearly identical throughout, and

the meaning absolutely so, except that, in the rehearsal in the plains of Moab, Moses supplemented the fourth commandment with a retrospective explanation of its reasons, and omits the reference to the creation contained in the original. The variations are confirmatory of the historical reality of the matter, for the one is evidently no copy of the other, but both independent accounts, written at two different times; and that, under such circumstances, they should be so alike in substance is evidence that they both refer to a matter of historic occurrence. Those, therefore, speak otherwise than as scholars who talk of "perplexity (on the part of believers) in having to defend two opposing accounts." The two accounts are not "opposing," but mutually confirmatory; and there is no perplexity in the maintenance of both when this is done on Bible ground simply, apart from the theories of inspiration which belong to the clerical thought merely. The Spirit, doubtless, guided Moses in the record, but the guidance had reference more to substance than to form. The Scriptures never show us the preternatural brought to bear where the natural is sufficient.

It is put forward by the same class as an implied impossibility, that God should "issue a complete ethical code which contains nothing about the love of God or the love of man, nothing about public or private worship or prayer; nothing about trust in God or gratitude towards Him: nothing about such virtues as generosity, gratitude, prudence, temperance, fortitude, activity, nor thoughtfulness, which offers a reward to virtue, but not an eternal reward; and not the reward of God's blessing and a good conscience, but longevity in one narrative, and in the other, prolonged residence in Judea." This is very specious; but the fallacy of it is apparent when a demand is made for the authority for assuming that the Bible puts forth the Mosaic law or any part of it as "a complete ethical code." The Bible does the very opposite. It declares the law to have been provisional, partial and imperfect, adapted only to the transition period for which it was given. Paul, discussing this very point, discourses thus: "God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise . . . Wherefore, then, serveth the law? It was added, because of transgression, till the seed should come . . . The law was our schoolmaster [a teacher of first lessons] unto Christ. . . after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."—(Gal. iii. 19, 24, 25.) The law he further styles a "shadow of good things to come" (Heb. xi. 1); and that it made nothing perfect (vii. 19). There is a good deal of evidence on this point; but it is perhaps unnecessary to quote more than the following: "If the first covenant (the law) had been faultless, then had no place been sought for the second."—(Heb. viii. 7.) Mr. Bradlaugh may object to this teaching of Paul's, but he ought, at all events, to see that it is a false assumption that the law, or any part of it, is put forward by the Bible as "a complete ethical code."

It was a system of things which was never intended as a complete development of the divine will, but adapted to the special exigencies of a time of crudeness and transition. For these times its adaptation was admirable. Its immeasurable superiority is realised when contrasted with the contemporary morals of Egypt and Chaldea, or (later) of Greece and Rome. It is not doing justice to the subject to judge of the Mosaic system of things in the light of the larger illumination that has since come from the same source. Granted that it had nothing to do with "eternal rewards," a reason might be given for this which would startle sceptics, and that is, that eternal rewards of the clerical order are fictions of Paganism. This answer can be substantiated. Disembodied destinies are unknown to the teaching of Christ and Moses. The Bible treats immortality as a something extraneous to human nature, and to be realised (in a limited number of cases only) by resurrection at Christ's reappearance on the earth. The immortality of the soul is not mentioned in either the Old or New Testaments. It is foreign to the teaching of both, as much as it is opposed to philosophical truth of the Huxley order.

Then Mr. Bradlaugh said something about the Bible being opposed to science. He did not elaborate this objection. Presumably his reference was to the notion that the Bible "teaches that the universe was created in six days, six thousand years ago." This is not a correct representation of what is involved in a reception of the Mosaic account. "Heaven and earth" of Genesis is not synonymous with "the universe." Heaven is described as "the firmament," formed "to divide the waters that are

above the firmament from the waters that were under it." It is, therefore, the body of atmosphere encircling the globe, whose existence was thus Mosaicly made known ages before it was philosophically ascertained. The testimony is, that heaven and earth, in this limited sense, were the subject, six thousand years ago, of a process called "create." But does this create (*bara*) express the theological idea of being "made out of nothing?" By no means, for such an idea is foreign to the Bible. The teaching on this point is, that all things were formed "out of God."—(Rom. xi. 36; Cor. viii. 6), and the Hebrew verb *bara*, translated "create," signifies to make, in the sense of constitute, arrange, set in order. It is used periphrastically with "formed the earth to be inhabited" in Isa. xlv. 18. It is translated "made" in the following instances: Psalm xlvii. 48; Num. xvi. 30; "done," in Ex. xxxiv. 10; "choose," in Ezekiel xxi. 17; "make fat," in Samuel ii. 29; in other places, "create." That Moses does not teach the *creation* of the earth in the ordinary sense, six thousand years ago, is proved by his recognition of a pre-"creation" existence. Before the six days' work began, he speaks of the earth as being "without form and void," and "darkness on the face of the deep."—(Gen. i. 2.) How long it had been in this state is not hinted; but the narrative leaves room for the measureless ages said to be required by geology. Neither was the human the first rational race on its surface, if we are to attach the same sense to the words addressed to Adam as they possessed when addressed to Noah: "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish (fill again) the earth." There may have been a previous race, swept away after the manner of the flood, the catastrophe leaving the earth in the state in which the six days' work found it. Jude and Peter both refer to pre-Adamite occurrences in this direction.—(2 Peter ii. 4; Jude 6.) The work occupying the six days was the work of reclaiming the world from pre-Adamite chaos, with which there is nothing inconsistent in the "historical, critical, and scientific books," to which it is usual to make such reverential allusion.

"That because God then rested, the last day of the week is to be observed as a day of absolute idleness" is usually a difficulty brought forward by the sceptical objector. That he should stumble at it with orthodox views of divine operations, is no matter of marvel. The difficulty is not incidental to the subject itself. The "Elohim," the angels of Almighty power, carrying out the mandates of Omnipotence in the re-organisation of the world, must have expended vast energies in the enormous physical achievements of the six days; and although their endowment with these energies must be correspondingly vast, there is nothing inconceivable in their finding the seventh day's cessation a source of refreshment. The Creator only is unlimited in His power. The idea may be startling to clerical minds, but it belongs to the Bible, and is the explanation of what strikes him in this item as inexplicable.

In Genesis i. light appears on the scene before the sun. This is made a difficulty needlessly. If all light came from the sun, it might be a difficulty; but there are many sources of light besides the sun. Witness the phosphorescent glow of the ocean at night. There is light in the rocks. A blow with a steel instrument will manifest a spark of it. Light is latent everywhere. It requires but all-controlling Power to be brought to bear to make it manifest; and this was what took place in the present instance. The Spirit of God, which is in itself the light of all light, brooding on the face of the waters, illumined the darkness covering the face of the deep. But it is said, What need for this mode of light, seeing the sun was in the heavens, where it had been for countless ages? Answer: there are conditions of the atmosphere which prevent the light of the sun from coming through. An unusually dense storm-cloud will darken the air at noon. Now, it is evident that when the Mosaic six days' works of re-organisation began, the globe was enwrapped in watery vapours; for we read in verse 7 of a separation taking place between the light and the heavy elements of the vaporous mantle, the condensed water descending and the vapour ascending to the cloud region of the atmosphere. Before this took place, the vaporous covering of the earth would effectually prevent the light of the sun from reaching it, and cause that state of darkness which was first dispelled by Spirit-caused light.

Verses 16 and 17, speak as if the sun, moon and stars were then made for the first time. But the narrative was written for man as an inhabitant of the earth. We must therefore, read it from the terrestrial and not the astronomical stand-point.

From this point of view the sun, moon, and stars would come into existence at this time ; for previous to the fourth day, they would not be visible from the earth, on account of the condition of the atmosphere previously referred to ; and, therefore, practically, they did not exist in relation to the earth. It is not the modes of the divine procedure that are made the subject of narrative, but the practical results in relation to us. Yet the narrative is consistent with the modes, though the modes are not made visible. God made two great lights, &c. ; true : in this there is nothing as to how long He took to make them. Having made them, He placed them (or caused them to appear) in the terrestrial firmament on the fourth day. Thus the narrative suits the proximate aspect of the case, as it would have appeared to a man witnessing the evolutions of the six days, and at the same time, is not in conflict with the mightier phase in which they are to be contemplated through the medium of astronomical science.

There is palpable fallacy in Mr. Bradlaugh's method of construing evidence when it bears on divine things. Called upon to define the principle upon which he believes in the existence and productions of ancient secular writers, he says : "On matters of ordinary occurrence, I accept the best experience of the best men, as I find it fairly recorded, and upon that canon of evidence, I can prove all reasonable historic events." But when matters of extraordinary occurrence are in question, then he says "the experience does not apply." The fallacy here is that Mr. Bradlaugh sets up ordinary experience as the standard of what is "reasonable" and possible. If we accept testimony to things we know to be possible, it is not because of the nature of the things testified, but because of the reliability of the testimony proved in various ways before we accept it. Therefore, we should act illogically if we rejected the same testimony to an event out of the channel of our experience, merely on the ground that the event is out of the channel of our experience, for that would be the mere opposition of ignorance to knowledge. For example : a European banished a hundred years ago, to a foreign island, cut off from all communication with the civilised world, has descendants who never heard of the electric telegraph. Mr. Bradlaugh visits them and tells them a message can be sent invisibly across three thousand miles of ocean in five minutes, and that when it arrives, it is not the paper written by the sender. They say he is fooling them. He earnestly declares it is true, and says he has witnessed the performance. They say it cannot be. Mr. Bradlaugh fetches men from the ship that has brought him to the island. They confirm his representation, and declare they also have seen the telegraph at work, and have themselves received messages from long distances in a few minutes, although the messages were invisible in the transmission. If they act on Mr. Bradlaugh's principle, the islanders will say the law of evidence does not apply in such a case, and those who give such evidence must be mistaken, because they declare a thing of "extraordinary occurrence," and inconsistent with their "experience." They would say, "If it had been a matter of ordinary occurrence," such as the sending of a letter under the wing of a bird, or shooting a message on an arrow, or darting a swift canoe across the water—anything in harmony with their "experience"—they could have received the testimony of Mr. Bradlaugh and his company ; but "when you give us an extraordinary occurrence—of a message going and not going—seen when you get it, and not seen when it is coming—that crosses the ocean and yet does not take time to cross—it is then, say they, that the canon of evidence does not apply."

Mr. Bradlaugh would be amused at the simplicity and conceit of the islanders. Their presumption also would strike him, in setting up their limited island experience as the measure of what is possible in the great world of civilisation. Yet this is the position which he himself takes up in relation to the testimony of the apostles. He does not deny that their testimony is given ; he does not deny that it is honest and capable testimony ; but he won't receive it because the testimony affirms the resurrection of Christ, which is "contrary to his experience." By the ordinary canon of evidence "the authenticity of the Bible is proved ; but because it testifies extraordinary occurrences," therefore, says Mr. Bradlaugh, "the ordinary canon does not apply !" The reasoning is utterly fallacious and perverse. It ought to go the other way round. Mr. Bradlaugh ought to say, "This testimony is authenticated in

too many ways for me to deny it. Therefore, although the testimony affirms something outside of the channel of my experience, it must be true; and I am ignorant of many things that are possible."

"But," says Mr. Bradlaugh, "this book tells me of a man who had no father." In this Mr. Bradlaugh is mistaken. It tells us of Jesus, who had no human father, but who had a father in the Creator, whose son he thereby became.—(Luke i. 35.) Surely Mr. Bradlaugh would not deny the possibility of the Power that produced the first man without human instrumentality, producing a second without human instrumentality.

"It tells me," says Mr. Bradlaugh, "of a man who was in the grave when he was out of it, and who was seen by one woman, who is two women, who are more than three women." This is a misrepresentation. Jesus was in the grave three days and three nights, as was shown to Mr. Bradlaugh in his last questioning of Mr. Roberts: and he was seen by one, by two, by three, and by more women, on the morning he rose from the dead. The evidence on the point is perfectly consistent, though varied in the form of its presentation, as was fully shown on the fifth night of the discussion.

"It tells me that Christ's mother's husband had two fathers." It does not, Mr. Bradlaugh. It gives you two genealogical lines—one Joseph's and the other Mary's, but both nominally terminating in Joseph, as the Jewish custom required; because Mary, by marriage, had become one with him.

"It tells me Christ lived at the same time in Judæa and Egypt." It does not, Mr. Bradlaugh. There is an omission of mention in Luke's narrative of the visit to Egypt, but that narrative is elliptical enough to allow of the insertion of Matthew's, though, at the first sight, the two are irreconcilable.

"It tells me that Christ was known to John and not known to him at the same moment of time." This is not so. John the Baptist knew Jesus as his righteous cousin, but not as the Messiah. His ignorance of his Messiahship may appear marvellous in the light we now possess; but it is otherwise when we remember the circumstances preceding Christ's baptism in the Jordan. John "was in the desert until the day of his showing to Israel."—(Luke i. 80.) He was brought up there from childhood. He was secluded from sources of information with regard to Jesus; and those sources, even if they had been accessible, were very scanty. The knowledge of Christ's exact origin and character was known in an express form only to Joseph and Mary, who were reticent on the subject (Luke ii. 33, 51), and to Elizabeth, John's mother, who being old, must have died soon after John's birth. By the time John was come to discretion, the matter had quieted down. Christ's boyhood and manhood, till thirty, were undistinguished by the supernatural. There was nothing to manifest his Messiahship. His unblemished character was known to John, but not his identity with the coming one. It had been revealed to John, that on whomsoever, in the act of baptism, the Holy Spirit should descend, that same was the Messiah; and on this his attention was fixed. Hence, his declaration, to which Mr. Bradlaugh's objection has reference: "I knew him not; but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit."—(John i. 33.)

Then Mr. Bradlaugh wants to know if the story of Sodom and Gomorrah is consistent with the omniscience or goodness of God. On the first point, he points out that "God is represented as saying that the report has reached Him about Sodom and Gomorrah, and that He is going down to enquire, and will know." The objection may be presumed to be expressed in the question, "If God is everywhere present, why did he want to come down to know?" In answer to this, it is sufficient to refer to what is written a few pages back (page 128), on the subject of angels and the use of the term "God," in describing their instrumental relation to things done by them in obedience to the Creator's mandate. What is there written furnishes the explanation to this objection. God in the case was the angels, undoubtedly, as anyone will see who will take the trouble to peruse the narrative, e.g., Gen. xix. 1: "And there came two angels to Sodom at even." Though the Creator is omniscient, it does not

follow the angels are. Peter (1 Pet. i. 12) hints in a contrary direction in saying, "Which things the angels desire to look into." The fact that the angels "do the commandments" (Psalm ciii. 20) is evidence of their limitation. Consequently, Mr. Bradlaugh's objection is founded on misapprehension. These remarks apply in other cases where Mr. Bradlaugh raises a similar objection.

As to his objection to the destruction of Sodom on the score of goodness, remarks already written on page 127 supply the answer. The destruction of the wicked, so far from being inconsistent with goodness, is a part of it. The eternal toleration of evil would be the frustration of eternal goodness. The wicked are useful in their place, their existence supplying one of the conditions of the probation of the opposite class; but goodness requires their final destruction. Consequently, the destruction of the Sodomites proves the very thing that Mr. Bradlaugh quotes it to disprove. The same remark applies to the deluge.

Mr. Bradlaugh's allusion to the Garden of Eden as "a damnation trap in which to catch the whole human race, so that God might punish them," is mere clap trap, or a trap to catch the claps of his shallow and ribald supporters. Even with the Calvinistic theory of pre-destinated eternal hell-fire for tormented millions in view, such a description of a matter only possibly involving important truth, is utterly reprehensible. But when directed against the Bible account of the matter, it is the rave of insanity. Adam was simply placed under a higher will than his own, and taught that submission to that will was imperative, and that revolt against it was so serious that nothing short of death would be the consequence. Mr. Bradlaugh may deny the existence of that superior will, but he cannot deny that the Bible theory of the fall, to which only his criticism can apply, involves it, and that therefore the matter is to be considered and judged on the theory of its existence. Looking at it in this way, the transaction of Eden certainly appears in a different light from that in which Mr. Bradlaugh's coarse description would make it appear. Subjection to God is the highest condition of human well being. It is the necessity of his nature when his nature is fully developed in all its faculties. It is also an element in divine pleasure and a prerogative of the divine right. Consequently an arrangement that brought that subjection visibly and consciously to bear on Adam, so far from being "monstrous," appears in the light of kindness and wisdom, whether in relation to God or man. The representation of the appointment of such an arrangement is in fact one of many proofs of the divinity of the Scriptures. A human conception of the beginning of things would certainly have represented man as free to do what he liked and as he liked. God's authority to which the human mind is naturally averse would not have been brought to bear at the very start of human existence in a humanly-invented version of the facts. Adam did not submit implicitly to the law in which divine authority embodied itself: consequently, there came on him, and therefore on his descendants who inherit his being, the consequences belonging to rebellion. Even had the transaction stopped here, there would have been no room for Mr. Bradlaugh's objection: for surely if a military officer may in Mr. Bradlaugh's estimation, legitimately shoot an insubordinate soldier, he cannot deny the Creator's right to deal as he likes with a disobedient creature. But we have to take the sequel into account. That sequel shows God making use of the evil result of the fall, as a means of developing at last the highest good on earth. Doubtless, the understanding of the truth is necessary to qualify a man to see this; and as Mr. Bradlaugh does not possess this understanding, he is not competent to judge the matter which he so harshly condemns. In any system of truth, a man must understand the system as a whole before he is qualified to rightly estimate any part of it in detail. This is peculiarly and emphatically true of the Bible as a whole. With regard to the "story of the fall" in the way Mr. Bradlaugh puts it, Mr. Bradlaugh can only succeed with those who are ignorant of the Bible. He and his disciples may know something of the trashy writers of ecclesiastical antiquity, and perhaps something of the ever-changing speculations of crude superficial scientists; but a man must be ignorant of the Bible or morally incapable of appreciating its system of teaching, who speaks of the garden of Eden as a "damnation trap."

Mr. Bradlaugh made some smart observations on the case of Jacob and Esau; but the smartness was in the way of marshalling his words, rather than in justly or logically treating the facts as they stand. He declared Jacob to be a rascal, a liar, a

robber, a cheat, and asked whether God loved Jacob because of these things or in spite of them. He omitted to show that Jacob was all these. He referred to certain recorded incidents, but these do not prove his contention. A liar is a man who is in the habit of lying: a rascal is a man who is in the habit of defrauding. A man's character is not to be described by isolated acts or incidents. A man may in the main be very different from some act in particular he has committed. Jacob's character in the main was such as to please God. In certain transactions he acted with human weakness. The record of the weakness is evidence of the genuineness of the record, for an invented history of Jacob would have suppressed them. Jacob was "a plain man dwelling in tents." He was docile and God-fearing, while Esau was a wild roving man, cognising the facts of nature merely as an animal does, without any recognition of the contriver and proprietor of nature. This constitutes the difference between men whom God is pleased with and those He is not pleased with. So it is revealed: "To this man will I look, who is humble and of a contrite heart, and who trembleth at my word." Mr. Bradlaugh may despise the fact; but it is not in his power, either to show it is not the fact or why it should not be the fact. Wise men are content with facts, whatever speculative theory they may have formed as to what things ought to be. The fact in this case is that the God of the Bible has declared He is pleased with those men who appreciate him, and will forgive their iniquities. The case of Jacob is an illustration of this revealed fact, instead of being a contradiction to it. And so also is the case of David on which Mr. Bradlaugh harped so much. He was emphatically "a man after God's own heart." Mr. Bradlaugh asks how could this be when he was a murderer and adulterer, and died with vindictive words in his mouth towards Shimei, Joab, and others. A "man after God's own heart" is a man who answers to the definition given by God Himself: "To this man will I look, to him that is poor and of contrite spirit, and *trembleth at my word*."—(Isaiah lxvi. 2.) David answered exactly to this description. God's word in anything commanded his profoundest reverence and regard; and when convinced of wrong-doing, he was penitent to the utmost abasement. He would not sanction the killing of Saul by Abishai, because Saul was the Lord's anointed.—(1 Sam. xxvi. 9-11.) He made instant confession and reparation in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. Towards God he was "as a little child," while, towards man, he was "a mighty man of valour." When he sinned, he confessed and forsook his sins. Thus he was a man after God's own heart. In considering his directions to Solomon concerning Shimei, Joab, &c., it must be remembered that David sat in the seat of judgment for God, and that the men in question had sinned against God in the several matters of their offence. If David had been personally vindictive, he would not have spared them as he did. As absolute monarch of Israel, under God, he had the power to take away their lives, which he would have done if characterised by the disposition suggested in the objection. Instead of that, he allowed them to live so long as he himself was alive, but left the judicial punishment of their crimes to the wisdom of Solomon.

This exhausts the scriptural difficulties referred to by Mr. Bradlaugh on the first night. He referred to them several times during the other nights, so that there will be the less to answer in the review of those nights.

Two other points will conclude this notice of the first night. Mr. Bradlaugh expressed surprise that Mr. Roberts should have assumed the admissibility of certain evidence in the debate, instead of coming prepared to prove it, link by link. "His business is," said Mr. Bradlaugh, "to prove as he goes on," which, of course, sounded very reasonable, but which, as Mr. Bradlaugh applied the axiom was very unreasonable. The thing he asked Mr. Roberts to do would have taken all the time in the doing, and would have left the real argument out in the cold. And it was perfectly unnecessary to do it. Everybody knows of the existence and authenticity of the books he asked Mr. Roberts to prove. The abundance of early forgeries does not interfere with this fact. He might as well have asked proof of the fact that King James's English Version of the Bible was a translation of the original. But, of course, Mr. Bradlaugh's cue was to entangle the debate with extraneous matters, like a counsel in a bad case, who harasses his opponent with technical objections, and keeps as long away from the merit as possible. On this principle, doubtless, he also tried

to make the differences between the Hebrew Scriptures and the Septuagint to appear much more serious than they are. The mere alteration of numerals he put forward as indicating extensive and radical dissimilarity, which does not exist. The Septuagint is the substantial counterpart in Greek of the Hebrew Scriptures; but, of course, it was Mr. Bradlaugh's aim to hide this as much as possible.

SECOND NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT

THE argument on this evening, taking the three speeches and the questions together, was more complete than the argument on the first night. In brief it amounted to this: There is no question that Christ was crucified. There is no question that his disciples afterwards preached his resurrection. How came they to do so, and how came thousands of those who had crucified him to believe? If Christ rose, there is an explanation. If Christ did not rise, the apostles declared what they knew to be false, and must have had a motive in doing so. What motive could they have? It brought them into collision with Jew and Pagan, and exposed them to incessant disadvantage. The only other alternative is: they may have sincerely believed that Christ rose though he never did; but this alternative is inconsistent with the facts. They did not expect Christ to die. When he died, they did not expect him to rise. When he rose they did not believe it. All this shows there was no predisposition to entertain a fantasy on the subject. What, then, led them to believe and preach the resurrection of Christ? The reason given for the change is a reasonable account of the change: Christ appeared to them, spoke to them, ate with them, asked them to handle him, stayed with them six weeks, and finally sent power to work miracles upon them. If this occurred there is an explanation of all that transpired afterwards. If this did not occur, there is no explanation of the great fact that a few poor men, whose doctrine was that they should not resist their enemies, succeeded in subverting Judaism and Paganism in the teeth of the organised opposition of both, and the effect of whose work is a fact of the present moment, inwrought with the life of all civilised nations, evidenced in every legal document which has to state in what "*year of our Lord*" the matter originates. The New Testament account exhibits a cause adequate to the establishment of that system in the world. If that is denied, we have an effect for which no efficient cause is shown.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

The only attempt Mr. Bradlaugh made to answer this was a loose allusion to the Mahomedans and Buddhists. "I do not dispute the existence of the Mahommedans, said he, but I should be very sorry to accept that as a proof of the authenticity and divinity of the Koran." The cases are not parallel; and Mr. Bradlaugh's assumption that they are, shows either that he did not understand, or that he chose to ignore his opponent's argument.

The existence of the Mahommedans is a proof of effectual means having been taken to establish Mahommedanism in the world. We examine the facts, and we see the nature and operation of these means at once. As has been truly said, Mahomet took the way to succeed. He gave his followers a commission to exterminate the infidel, and offered life and protection to everyone who should embrace Islamism. The system is embodied in the Koran. This Koran is in the hands of millions of Mahommedans in the present day, which proves it to be Mahomet's work, for no other than Mahomet's work could have obtained currency amongst them at the start, and none but the book current at the start could have obtained currency among their succeeding generations. Thus the existence of the Mahommedans with the Koran in their hands is a proof of the authenticity of the Koran; and an examination of their history and their documents explains their rise and success, and proves them not divine, for

Mahomet in the Koran admits the divinity of Abraham, the prophets and Christ, and thereby destroys his own claim, even if there were no other disproof; for the divinity of Christ excludes the divinity of any other "prophet, priest and king," which Mahomet was probably unaware of.

The argument of Mr. Bradlaugh's opponent was that when the history and literature of Christianity are examined in the same way, its divinity follows as a logical result. The present existence of professing Christians is only the first step in the argument. It is a great fact, calling for explanation. The explanation is contained in the book in the hands of Christians, the authenticity of which is proved exactly in the same way as the Koran (only that there is a large amount of collateral evidence, which is wanting in the case of the Koran). No other than the genuine writings of the apostles could have obtained universal currency among Christians at the start, and none but the writings universally current at the start could have obtained universal circulation among the succeeding generations, from which it follows that the book now in the hands of universal Christendom is the authentic work of the apostles. The testimony of early and doubtful Christian writers can be dispensed with in this argument. When, in the next place, we come to look at the facts connected with the rise and progress of the system established by them, we have no such explanation as exists in the case of Mohammedanism. While Mahomet took the way to succeed, Christ took the way to fail if no miracle was employed; for he prohibited his disciples from using the sword, and taught them to eschew in every form the physical resistance of their enemies. As a matter of fact, they did not resist, but fled from persecution, and suffered themselves, when caught, to be slain in large numbers. The State authorities employed their whole power against them; yet in spite of this, they finally planted Christianity in the world on the ruins of Paganism. Now, as a mere matter of common reason, there must have been a cause equal to this success. It cannot be found in the nature of the principles inculcated, for these are opposed to the natural tendencies of human nature. But it is found in that which they allege in their writings to have been the cause:—their testimony that Christ rose from the dead, and endowed them with supernatural gifts in attestation of their testimony. The first fact explains the constancy of the apostles, during years of suffering for their testimony. The second fact explains the great and widespread conviction produced by the testimony. Take away these facts, and there is no rational explanation of an undoubted historic fact, constituting the greatest revolution the world has ever seen.

Mr. Bradlaugh either did not see or evaded the force of this argument. He tried to pooh-pooh it by the general and absurd allusion to Mohammedanism already referred to. In quieter hours, the reader will, perhaps, be able to appreciate it at its true value.

Mr. Bradlaugh tried in the same way to reduce the evidence of Tacitus and Pliny to nothing. He said there was nothing in either of them to prove the authenticity and divinity of the Scriptures. They were not quoted to prove this by themselves, and, therefore, a statement like this does not get rid of them. They were quoted to prove the existence of a widely-scattered and persecuted community of Christians at the end of the first and beginning of the second centuries; and this they do prove most conclusively. And the proving of this establishes one step in the argument by which the authenticity and divinity of the Scriptures is proved. Therefore, the testimony of Tacitus and Pliny is of great importance in its place. Only an indiscriminating or a reckless opponent would assert it to be otherwise.

Mr. Bradlaugh asserted on the second night, and several times subsequently, that there is "tolerable evidence" "that the whole of the sacred books of the Jews were destroyed during the captivity, and had to be re-written." Mr. Bradlaugh made this statement with the view of casting discredit on the Old Testament part of the Bible; but the statement is not true. The testimony of Eusebius to this effect is a mere re-echo of a statement in the Book of Esdras; and though it might be valuable in proving Eusebius's acquaintance with Esdras, and, therefore, of the antiquity of Esdras, if that were called in question, just as his quotations from the New Testament are good evidence of the existence and authenticity of the New Testament, as against men like Mr. Bradlaugh, who find it necessary to deny that the New Testament was produced in the first century, it is of no weight

whatever in determining the truth of the statement of Esdras. We must consider that statement on its own merits. That the author of the Book of Esdras made the statement is without doubt; and it gives Mr. Bradlaugh a convenient peg on which to hang the theory that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are the production of Esdras, and not of Moses, and the other various writers to whom they are ascribed. But the merest comparison of any part of the Old Testament with the writings of Esdras is sufficient to convince minds of the most ordinary penetration, that the theory is without foundation. The author of the drivelling inanities of Esdras could never have written the lucid and majestic utterances of Deuteronomy. There is no more in common between Esdras and the Bible than there is between the doggerel rhymester of a village newspaper and the writings of Milton or Shakespeare. If Esdras wrote the books of the Old Testament, Esdras would have imparted his own qualities to them, and Esdras and the Bible would have been manifestly from the same hand. Instead of this, they are as dissimilar as possible. It may be said that Esdras wrote the books of Moses, &c., from memory, and that this would account for the difference between his own productions and the Scriptures of Moses and the prophets. Granted the possibility of an extraordinary verbal memory equal to the feat of reproducing burnt books; but in that case, the proof for the prior existence and authenticity of the books so re-produced would be the same as if they had not been burnt. The only difference would be, that instead of existing with an unbroken continuity in a literary form, they existed, for a short time, in the brain of a man who was thoroughly familiar with them.

But there is positive evidence that the Scriptures were not destroyed at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. That many copies were destroyed is highly probable, and that many Jewish persons may have supposed that these comprehended every copy is also possible, which may have given rise to the tradition reflected in the pages of Esdras. But there is evidence that this notion, if it existed, was a wrong notion. There were two deportations of captives from Jerusalem before the destruction of that city by Nebuchadnezzar.—(Jer. lii. 28-30.) Among them was Daniel, who says of himself: "In the first year of Darius (at the close of the seventy years' captivity), I, Daniel *understood by books* the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to *Jeremiah the prophet, &c.*"—(Dan. ix. 2.) Here is Jeremiah at least in the possession of Daniel seventy years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and before Esdras was written; and if the book of Jeremiah was in his possession, the other Scriptures would be in his possession also; for the reason that would lead him to have one part would lead him to have all. The probability is that he took them with him when carried from Jerusalem amongst other notable captives to Babylon.

Then we have "The Book of the Law of Moses" in the custody of those who returned from the captivity at Babylon. It was read to the congregation on their return to Jerusalem (Nehemiah xiii. 1), which establishes the conclusion to be inferred from the case of Daniel, that the Scriptures were in safe preservation, in the custody of such as feared God among the captives in Babylon, notwithstanding the destruction that befel the temple and its contents. That such should be the case is most natural, in view of the special duty that devolved on the priests to take charge of and instruct the people in the holy writings, as has already been shown in the review of the first night.

If it is objected that the evidence is derived from the books said to have been destroyed and re-written by Esdras, it only shows the falsity of that idea all the more forcibly; for had the statement been true, the internal evidence of the books said to have been reproduced, and for such a reason, would have supported and not confuted it. Mr. Bradlaugh is very willing to believe Eusebius when he supposes his statements are damaging to the Scriptures; but, fortunately, there is evidence that Eusebius' borrowed information on this point is incorrect. Finally, even if true, it would not weaken the foundation on which the validity of the Scriptures rests; for Christ endorsed them; and if his resurrection is proved, his endorsement of them would be proof of the authenticity and divinity of the Scriptures, even if they had, at one time, been annihilated, and required to be reproduced by Esdras or anybody else.

THE GOD REVEALED IN THE BIBLE.

We next pass to Mr. Bradlaugh's remarks on the God revealed in the Bible. It is, doubtless, true that the Bible reveals "something much clearer than" that He is the "primal creative energy." The statement that he was the primal creative energy was an accommodation to those who ask for God from the merely scientific point of view. It was advanced as a definition at once the simplest and most unassailable by those who deny Him. It was not intended to express all that is revealed of Him; but it does express the primary fact that all things are *ἐκ αὐτοῦ*, out of Him (1 Cor. viii. 6; Rom. xi. 36); that they exist and subsist in Him (Acts xvii. 28), and that they are sustained by the word of His power, which is universal (Heb. i. 3; Ps. cxxxix. 7-12.) The definition, however, does not exclude nor conflict with other things that are revealed concerning Him; and those other things are not of the contradictory character which Mr. Bradlaugh's reckless allegation would make them appear. The Bible reveals "a God who is everywhere, and who lives somewhere above," without teaching an anomaly; for its teaching on the subject is that the universal "spirit" and the Father dwelling in heaven are one God (Ps. cxxxix. 1-12; 1 Cor. ii. 10-11; Matt. vi. 4, 9; x. 20.) Mr. Bradlaugh and his friends may not be able to comprehend this idea; but it is not altogether inconceivable to those who realise the unity subsisting between the sun and the light of the sun diffused through space—two things absolutely one in nature and connection, and yet capable of being spoken of as two things. If the sun can be in heaven, and people on earth can yet talk of letting the sun in at their windows, it is not necessarily a contradiction to teach that "God lives somewhere above," and is yet everywhere present. The one is a visible fact; the other is an attested fact, though invisible, and this is all the difference as regards their relation to our understanding. They are both equally inscrutable and both equally reasonable. There is something subtler than light. Scientific men call it "force;" and to this force they ascribe all manifestations of force, light itself included. What it is, they know not and cannot conceive; but its existence is none the less apparent to their understandings. Consequently the Bible, in teaching an universal inscrutable Spirit, teaches no more than we are compelled scientifically to receive; only it adds what science cannot know or find out—that this universal primal force has focal centre in a Supreme Personal Intelligence of tangible glory and form. Such as Mr. Bradlaugh can only say they don't believe it; they cannot disprove it, and they cannot show a reason why it should not be so. No reason can be given for the primary and the absolute. It may as well be one thing as another, so far as our conceptions or inductions are concerned. Our simple duty is to find out what it is and believe. It is for the earnest mind to decide whether the Bible does not reveal it. Mr. Bradlaugh's contradiction does not get rid of it. Its revealing that God is everywhere and yet in heaven, instead of proving the Bible undivine, is an evidence in the other direction; for human reason would not have conceived of a thing so apparently contradictory.

As to its revealing "a God who could be seen and who could not be seen," that is explained by the fact developed early in the review—that while angels, bearing the name of God as His representative to men, were often seen, the Eternal Father Himself is invisible to mortal eye, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."—(1 Tim. vi. 16.) So also with its representations of "a God who knew everything and did not know some things:" the Eternal Father knows all things: but "the angels who do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word," (Psalm ciii. 20,) and who, bearing His name, are sent forth to execute His behests, they do not necessarily know all things. Even the Son of God was limited in his knowledge, (Mark xiii. 32,) though he could say "I and the Father are one."—(John x. 30.) Mr. Bradlaugh makes havoc of the general teaching of the Bible from ignorance of the details of what it reveals. He is like a child telling a professor of electrical science that he contradicts himself because he says electricity binds together and rends asunder. There is a well-known saying about certain who rush in where angels fear to tread. The saying is not inapplicable to those who criticise in Mr. Bradlaugh's ferocious and blundering style.

As to the Bible teaching "a God who is unchangeable, continually changing," the

charge is not true. It has already been dealt with and it is unnecessary to repeat; we notice it merely to make our review of the second night complete.

Mr. Bradlaugh makes great capital out of the slavery clauses of the Mosaic code. He does this by an illegitimate treatment of the subject only. He makes no allowance for the prerogative of God, as the proprietor of all things, to dispose of men as He chooses; nor of His right and ability to give laws adapted to such special ends as He might have in view at any particular time. No candid man could be guilty of this mistake. It is expressly declared in Ezekiel that the Mosaic statutes were designedly otherwise than good. Thus: "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes and polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols, wherefore *I gave them also statutes THAT WERE NOT GOOD* and judgments whereby they should not live."—(Ezekiel xx. 24–25.) Peter also speaks of the Mosaic law as "a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear," (Acts xv. 10), and Paul describes it as "a ministration of death."—(2 Cor. iii. 7.) Mr. Bradlaugh may say it was unreasonable that God should give a law of this defective and oppressive nature, (though such a criticism would be the height of presumption,) but he cannot say that the Bible puts it forward as an absolutely good thing in its entirety. Consequently, he is precluded from founding any argument against the Bible on its non-goodness in any particular. The Bible professes it was not good in some of its statutes, and perhaps these included the slave laws on which Mr. Bradlaugh founded his inuendo. The fact that it should declare some of them to be "not good" (and that because of Israel's sin) is another of the many indirect proofs of its divinity; for merely human writers would never have spoken thus of their own law, especially for such a reason.

Mr. Bradlaugh tries to make light of the Septuagint as a witness to the authenticity and reliability of the Hebrew Scriptures. This literary monument is self-evidently a witness of the most valuable kind, notwithstanding the doubts raised by learning. The opponents of the Bible would certainly feel themselves relieved of a great difficulty if the Septuagint ceased to exist. As Mr. Bradlaugh laid stress on the fact that Mr. Roberts did not read the extract from Josephus in support of it, the extract from Josephus is here set forth as follows:

"When Alexander had reigned twelve years, and after him Ptolemy Soter forty years, Philadelphus then took the kingdom of Egypt, and held it forty years within one. . . . Demetrius Phalerius, who was library keeper to the king, was now endeavouring, if it were possible, to gather together all the books that were in the habitable earth, and buying whatsoever was anywhere valuable, or agreeable to the king's inclination; (who was very earnestly set upon collecting of books,) to which inclination of his, Demetrius was zealously subservient. And when once Ptolemy asked him how many ten thousands of books he had collected, he replied, that he had already about twenty times ten thousand. But he said he had been informed that there were many books of laws among the Jews worthy of inquiring after, and worthy of the king's library, but which, being written in characters and in a dialect of their own, will cause no small pains in getting them translated into the Greek tongue: that the character in which they are written seems to be like that which is the proper character of the Syrians, and that its sound when pronounced, is like to theirs also; and that this sound appears to be peculiar to themselves. Wherefore, he said that nothing hindered why they might not get those books translated to be also; for while nothing is wanting that is necessary for that purpose, we may have their books also in this library. So the king thought that Demetrius was very zealous to procure him abundance of books, and that he suggested what was exceeding proper for him to do; and therefore he wrote to the Jewish high priest that he should act accordingly. . . . Ptolemy wrote, and that in the manner following:—'King Ptolemy to Eleazar the high priest, sendeth greeting . . . I have determined to procure an interpretation of your law, and to have it translated out of Hebrew into Greek, and to be deposited in my library. Thou wilt therefore do well to choose out and send to me men of a good character, who are now elders in age, and six in number out of every tribe. These by their age, must be skilful in the laws and of abilities to make accurate interpretation of them; and when this shall be finished, I shall think that I have done a

work glorious to myself; and I have sent to thee Andreas, the captain of my guard and Aristeus, men whom I have in very great esteem; by whom I have sent those first-fruits which I have dedicated to the temple, and to the sacrifices, and to other uses, to the value of a hundred talents; and if thou wilt send to us, to let us know what thou wouldst have further, thou wilt do a thing acceptable to me?

"When this epistle of the king was brought to Eleazar, he wrote an answer to it with all the respect possible:—'Eleazar the high priest to king Ptolemy, sendeth greeting. If thou and thy queen Arsinoe, and thy children, be well, we are entirely satisfied. When we received thy epistle, we greatly rejoiced at thy intentions; and when the multitude were gathered together we read it to them, and thereby made them sensible of the piety thou hast towards God. We also showed them the twenty vials of gold, and thirty of silver, and the five large basins, and the table for the shew-bread; as also the hundred talents for the sacrifices, and for making what shall be needful at the temple: which things Andreas and Aristeus, those most honourable friends of thine have brought us; and truly they are persons of an excellent character, and of great learning, and worthy of thy virtue. Know then, that we will gratify thee in what is for thy advantage, though we do what we used not to do before; for we ought to make a return for the numerous acts of kindness which thou hast done to our countrymen. We immediately, therefore, offered sacrifices for thee and for thy sister, with thy children and friends; and the multitude made prayers that thy affairs may be to thy mind; and that thy kingdom may be preserved in peace, and that the translation of our law may come to the conclusion thou desirest, and be for thy advantage. We have also chosen six elders out of every tribe, whom we have sent, and the law with them. It will be thy part out of thy piety and justice, to send back the law when it hath been translated; and to return those to us who bring it, in safety.—Farewell?"

"This was the reply which the high priest made; but it does not seem to me to be necessary to set down the names of the seventy (two) elders who were sent by Eleazar, and carried the law, which yet were subjoined at the end of the epistle And when they were come to Alexandria, and Ptolemy heard that they were come, and that the seventy elders were come also, he presently sent for Andreas and Aristeus, his ambassadors, who came to him, and delivered him the epistle which they brought him from the high priest, and made answers to all the questions he put to them by word of mouth. He then made haste to meet the elders that came from Jerusalem for the interpretation of the laws. . . . And when they had gone over the bridge he proceeded to the northern parts, and showed them where they should meet, which was in a house which was built near the shore, and was a quiet place, and fit for their discoursing together about their work. When he had brought them thither, he entreated them (now they had all things about them which they wanted for the interpretation of their law,) that they would suffer nothing to interrupt them in their work. Accordingly, they made an accurate interpretation, with great zeal and great pains; and this they continued to do till the ninth hour of the day; after which time they relaxed and took care of their body, while their food was provided for them in great plenty; besides, Dorotheus, at the king's command, brought them a great deal of what was provided for the king himself. But in the morning they came to the court, and saluted Ptolemy, and then went away to their former place, where, when they had washed their hands, and purified themselves, they betook themselves to the interpretation of the laws. Now when the law was transcribed, and the labour of interpretation was over, which came to its conclusion in seventy-two days, Demetrius gathered all the Jews together to the place where the laws were translated and where the interpreters were, and read them over. . . . So the king rejoiced when that his design of this nature was brought to perfection to so great advantage, and he was chiefly delighted with hearing the laws read to him and was astonished at the deep wisdom and meaning of the legislator."

So much for Josephus's intelligent account of the origin of the Septuagint.

Mr. Bradlaugh's allusion to the Darghestan roll is illustrative of his sense of the value of the Septuagint to the defenders of the Bible; and it also illustrates the facility with which he can lay hold of an utterly worthless argument when the case he is opposing fails to admit of reasonable objection. He says, "There is no Pentateuch roll which can be carried back earlier than the famous Darghestan roll, and that comes nearly 600 years on this side of the Christian era, by the contention of its best men—580 odd years." This has nothing to do with the question. The question is not as to the age of a particular document, in the antiquarian sense, but the age of the Septuagint as a literary production. Surely our confidence in the authorship of a book does not depend upon the possession of the manuscript he wrote, or any other MS. of a particular age. If it does, how comes Mr. Bradlaugh to receive so implicitly the writings of Philo, on which he founds his preposterous theory of Christianity originating with the Essenes? Philo wrote 1,800 years ago, and, probably, the oldest copy of his works is not a fourth of the age of "the famous Darghestan roll" of the Pentateuch. Yet Mr. Bradlaugh, who receives Philo in the absence of ancient copies, makes it an objection in the case of the Pentateuch, that the oldest copy is more than a thousand years old! This is mere child's play. The Darghestan roll, the oldest of ancient copies of the Pentateuch, is only the survivor of a family of similar documents, whose origin, in a literary sense, is traceable to the incident recorded by Josephus, who wrote 1,800 years ago.

Mr. Bradlaugh makes some proper remarks on the subject of martyrdom, without, however, weakening the force of the argument arising from the martyrdom of the apostles. "Martyrdom," he says, "is no voucher for the divinity" of the thing for which the martyr suffers death. "There have been martyrs for every heresy." True; but martyrdom is an evidence of sincerity; and this sincerity becomes an important affair to consider when the question involved is a question of fact, in which the sufferer was a personal witness of the fact alleged. If a man suffers death for an opinion, his death is no proof that his opinion was right, but it is a proof he sincerely held it, and may lead thoughtful people to investigate the grounds on which it was held. But the case is different in an instance like the apostles. They suffered persecution not for an opinion, but for declaring they had seen Christ alive after his crucifixion. This was a question of fact. Their suffering death for such a cause is proof that they believed the fact; and the only question left to be investigated is as to whether they were mistaken in their belief. An investigation of this question, conducted on the ordinary principles of evidence, leaves no room for doubt; and the only ground of opposition that can be taken to their testimony is the one that was taken by a gentleman on board the *Aleppo*, who being pressed on this point, admitted that he could not get rid of the evidence of Christ's resurrection, but that he could not receive it, because it testified to a thing that was out of the region of his experience. The absurd nature of this position has already been noticed.

The very circumstance which Mr. Bradlaugh cites in opposition to their testimony is a proof of its reliability. He says: "I will show you that when Jesus was in danger, his disciples ran away, and his most trusty disciple denied him over and over again." It is true that the disciples fled when the officers came to apprehend Jesus, and that Peter denied him three times. Yet all the disciples (and Peter in particular) afterwards bore witness to his resurrection, and suffered for their testimony, as the same account tells us. This leads to two questions, which cannot be reasonably answered without affording proof of the truth of Christ's resurrection. How came men who deserted Christ in the presence of danger, to afterwards brave death by their testimony to his resurrection? Such men must have had a good reason for taking a course which amounted to walking into the jaws of death itself. If Christ rose and appeared to them, there is a reason which explains all. If Christ did not rise, we have the inconceivable phenomena of proved cowards acting the part of heroes on behalf of a lie, and succeeding, without the use of force, in establishing the Christian faith, in the face of armed opposition on the part of the two great religious organizations of the age—Judaism and Paganism. The other question is, How comes the New Testament to record that "the disciples ran away and his most trusty disciple denied him over and over again?" If the apostolic work was not divine, it was a human work conceived with human objects and established by human means. In that case, the New Testament was written for the purpose of

establishing the credit of the apostles and the prestige of their work, from a human point of view. On such a supposition, it is impossible to understand the desertion of the disciples and the unfaithfulness of Peter being placed on record. It is an unknown thing in the history of imposture or fanaticism, that pretenders labouring to establish the credit of an imposture, should publish facts tending to throw discredit on it; least of all, that the leader of the movement should be held up, at one time, as a traitor to the cause, in the very documents intended to establish its reputation! But if Christ rose from the dead, all is explained. We then see that these things are placed on record, first because they happened, and, secondly, because their occurrence was wholesome to be known, both as regarded the apostles themselves, who were liable, in their privileged position to be exalted above measure, and believers in general who might be tempted to regard the apostles as free from human frailty.

Mr. Bradlaugh objects to the statement that both Jew and Gentile admit that the body of Christ could not be found after his crucifixion. He thinks such an assertion reckless, and illustrative of carelessness in the use of words. He challenges the production of any Rabbinical admission to the effect that the body of Christ could not be found. The answer is that this is one of many things which are obviously true without being capable of technical demonstration. There are demonstrations that are more conclusive than technical demonstrations. In this case, we have an illustration. The Jews, to this day, say the disciples of Christ stole the body of Christ, and then raised the report that he had risen. What is this but an admission that the body could not be found? If the body of Christ could have been found, would this story, which dates away back to the very beginning of the "Christian Era," have been invented? On the contrary, would not the body have been produced, to the utter confutation of the apostolic testimony in that and all subsequent times? This question acquires increased force, in view of the fact that the apostles were apprehended and imprisoned by the very council of priests that obtained the crucifixion of Jesus. When the apostles were brought before them as prisoners at the bar, what did the apostles say? "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom YE SLEW AND HANGED ON A TREE. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. And *we are witnesses of these things*, and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." The apostles accused their judges of being the slayers of Jesus. Their judges, it is added, "were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."—(Acts v. 33). Now, in such a state of mind, would not their judges have obtained possession of the body of Jesus had it been obtainable, and, by its production, have silenced for ever the intolerable testimony of the disciples, who fled from Christ in the hour of darkness, but were now so bold? The fact that they did not do so is in itself proof that the body of Christ could not be found, and that they admitted it. This is proof that will be conclusive to most minds, even if Mr. Bradlaugh requires the evidence of "Rabbinical writings" for it, which even if produced, would be scouted by him as freely as other more unimpeachable writings were.

THIRD NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT.

THE argument on Paul's case was fairly developed. It lacked entire fulness, however, owing to the absence of some things which time did not admit the introduction of. This applies to both arguments used and to arguments not used. As to the arguments used, they might be made fuller and richer and stronger: but the length to which the review has already gone compels us to be content to allow them to go as they are.

The arguments not used were those which go to show the impossibility of Paul's case being explained on any hypothesis except the one that he was a true man. And

these can only now be indicated in a brief manner. For their full elucidation, the reader is referred to Lord Lyttelton's treatise on the case of Paul. Mr. Roberts intended to submit had time admitted, that Paul was either,

- 1.—An impostor who declared what he knew to be untrue for selfish ends.
- 2.—A self-deceived enthusiast.
- 3.—An enthusiast deceived by others, or
- 4.—A true man undeceived by himself or others, who related what actually occurred, to whom Christ actually appeared, who really wrought miracles, and who is therefore a true witness of the resurrection of Christ, and therefore of the divinity of the Scriptures.

Paul must have been one of these four. Taking them one by one, it was intended to be argued—

1.—That he could not have been an impostor, aiming by falsehood at selfish ends, because, as a matter of fact, his testimony cost him everything dear to man: fortune, friends, reputation, and at last life itself (Phil. iii. 8, "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ;," also see 1 Cor. iv. 9-13.) Also, because his demeanour is inconsistent with the character of an impostor, as illustrated by his life as recorded by Luke in the Acts, of which this is a fair specimen: "And as we tarried there (at Cæsarea) many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owleth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hand of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."—(Acts xxi. 10-14.) Anyone who can imagine an impostor enacting this part has no acquaintance with human nature. Again, take the speech which Paul addressed to the elders of the Ephesian Church at Miletus, on the occasion of parting from them for the last time: "Ye know that from the first day I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and many tears and temptations which befel me by lying in wait of the Jews. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God." . . . I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea; ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things how that so labouring, ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus: how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—(Acts xx. 18-24; 33-35.) These are not the words of an impostor. Neither were Paul's doctrines by possibility the doctrines of an impostor. For a fair example of them, the 2nd chapter of his epistle to Titus may be read.

It was then intended to be argued that he could not have been a self-deceived enthusiast (that is, a man victimised by a feverish mental illusion, which impelled him, in a state of semi-madness to declare things that he thought true, but which were not true). 1, Because the convictions he entertained were not such as the laws of hallucination would have predisposed him to entertain, if he were of that temperament. The conviction that a crucified claimant of the Messiahship was really the Christ, was opposed to his education as a Jew and a Pharisee, and opposed to his natural bent as a combative and energetic upholder of the law of Moses. His education as a Jew would implant the view that the Messiah, when he appeared, would be immortal, and that therefore, Jesus, as having been crucified, could not be he; while, on the other hand, his conviction that the law of Moses was divine, and

his ardent desire to signalise himself in its defence, would incline him strongly to set himself against a doctrine that a crucified Christ was the end of the law. To oppose the apostles would naturally appear to such a man to be doing God service. Hallucination in a case like Paul's, according to the law of that disease, would have taken a form in harmony with these Judaic proclivities. The vision seen as the result of hallucination would have been a vision instructing him to extirpate the Christians and championize the cause of Judaism throughout the world. Instead of that he was arrested in the very act of giving effect to all his cherished convictions. On an expedition to destroy the Christians, he saw something which went directly in the teeth of his education—something that was in direct opposition to his purpose, and which diverted his whole energy into the very opposite channel, becoming a preacher of the faith which formerly he destroyed. 2. The nature of the work to which he set himself was not what a self-deceived enthusiast would have undertaken, and certainly one he would not have succeeded in. He sought to turn the pagans from idolatry, the Jews from their stereotyped and lifeless Judaism, and all men from sin, with the object in all cases "that they might receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance," in a kingdom to be set up by Christ at his return. In the execution of this work, he shewed none of the egotism of an enthusiast. He did not seek to bring attention to himself. On the contrary, he objected to those among the Corinthians who said "I am of Paul." His remark on this point was "Who is Paul, and who is Appolos, but ministers by whom ye believed?"—(1 Cor. iii. 5.) Then Paul's success is evidence that he was no mere enthusiast. That he was successful cannot be denied. The modern existence of Christendom is evidence of it. His success involved the bringing over of "a great company of the priests," of the temple (Acts vi. 7,) and the turning away of all the lesser Asia from idolatry.—(Acts xix. 26.) How could an enthusiast, with nothing else than ignorant heated words have achieved such results? But if Paul saw Christ and had a word of salvation from him, and if "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul," the success is accounted for; and in that case, Paul was no mere enthusiast. His words are not the words of heated enthusiasm in any case. We have them in his letters and speeches written and delivered under many circumstances, and they are all cool, sober, logical words, such as a man who had seen Christ, and who was endowed with the spirit of God would write, and never such as the victim of hallucination would write. 3. This introduces the next disproof of his having been a self-deceived enthusiast. His doings and sayings are those of a clear-headed, courteous, reasonable man, accommodating himself to circumstances as the interests of the object he had in view required, which is an entire contrast to the deportment of a self-deceived victim of a deranged imagination. Thus he is personally respectful to Felix, Festus and Agrippa, and temperate and coherent in the defence he was called upon to offer in answer to the accusation of the Jews. Let any one doubting this, read the 24th, 25th and 26th chapters of Acts. Thus also he adapted himself to the various classes with whom he came in contact in such a way as their several cases required, in regard to their acceptance of the gospel. His testimony on this point is this: "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without the law as without law . . . that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some."—(1 Cor. ix. 19-22.) These are not the tactics of an illusionist, but of a sensible man with an important work in hand. Enthusiasts, who are so to the extent of being victims of self-deception, do not work in this rational way. The same feature of calm good sense is illustrated by his avoidance of the martyrdom which the Jews were prepared to bestow upon him. The Jews formed a plot for his destruction at the time he was a prisoner in the hands of the Romans.—(Acts xxiii. 12.) Paul got 'know of it, and informed the Roman captain. The captain sent him to Caesar under guard, transferring him to the jurisdiction of Felix, and afterwards of Festus sent for the Jewish council to prefer their accusation against Paul at Caesar. When they came they asked Festus to try Paul's case at Jerusalem, intending to kill him on the way thither. Paul said he was not unwilling to die if he was proved worthy of death; but he objected to be given into the hands of the Jews, as

appealed to be reserved to the hearing of Cæsar at Rome. This was not the action of an enthusiast, who would have rushed with bravado into the jaws of death. It was the action of a reasonable man who felt and tried to avoid the calamities incident to his position as an apostle, but who, nevertheless, persevered in the testimony that brought them, because he knew it was true. The same remarks apply to the case in which he made use of his status as a Roman citizen to avoid examination by scourging.—(Acts xxii. 25.) It was the act of a cool and astute and sensible man and not of an enthusiast, who would simply have blundered himself into difficulties in a heated and irrational manner, and lacked capacity or desire to extricate himself in a sensible way. 4. Enthusiasts are usually vain, and have a conceit of their personal importance in relation to whatever hobby they have in hand. Paul's letters exhibit the reverse of this. He says of himself that he "was not meet to be called an apostle" (1 Cor. xv. 9), and this not in a mawkish spirit of self-depreciation, but for a reason which he immediately adds, "because I persecuted the church of God." For the same reason he styles himself "less than the least of all saints" (Eph. iii. 8), and also "the chief of sinners."—(1 Tim. i. 15.) In 1 Cor. xi. he apologises for having to indulge in self-vindication in defence against the slanders of traducers. These are not the expressions of a self-deceived and egotistic enthusiast: they are just the sort of expressions to be expected from a capable man who had committed a great mistake through ignorance, but who, with all his faculties about him, had seen his mistake, and, under a deep sense of humiliation, was striving to undo the mistake by a lifetime of exertion.

The facts of the case distinctly exclude the theory of Paul being a self-deceived enthusiast. Therefore the only enquiry remaining, is whether he was deceived by others, to which the answer is brief. This was perhaps sufficiently touched on the third night of the debate. It was shown that the occurrence which changed him from a persecutor into a defender of the Christian faith, was of such a nature as not to admit of the operation of third parties in the way of deception.—(Acts ix.; xxvi.) As Paul afterwards said to Agrippa, it was a thing "not done in a corner," but in the presence of a band of officers, and in the full blaze of the noon-day sun. Paul and the whole company were struck to the earth by a light "above the brightness of the sun." A communication was made to Paul in their presence, audible to them all, but intelligible only to Paul, as it was made in "the Hebrew tongue." They heard the voice, but saw no man. The attempt of Mr. Bradlaugh to make a contradiction between the account which says they heard the voice and the account which says they did not hear the voice, was disposed of in the debate. They heard the voice but could not make out the words. So may we dispose of Mr. Bradlaugh's attempt to make a difficulty of the fact that one account says they all fell to the earth and another that "they stood speechless." The two statements are perfectly reconcilable if we suppose the company were felled to the earth by the first burst of the brightness, and afterwards rose and stood speechless while Paul received the communication addressed to him. This is not a gratuitous supposition; for that they did rise to their feet after falling is certain, seeing they afterwards led Paul by the hand to Damascus. Two truthful accounts must be consistent one with another, even if they appear contradictory; and the lover of truth is not to be scared away from the endeavour to establish their consistency by the irrational dogmatism (unconcerned to find the truth), which says there ought to be nothing to reconcile. When the incident was at an end, Paul was found to be blind and remained blind for three days, and only had his sight restored by the healing interposition of one of the Christian disciples of Damascus whom he had come to destroy. This evidence of the reality of the revelation to Paul was left behind in a way that made doubt impossible. The whole event was of a character that did not admit of third parties interposing as deceivers of Paul. Consequently, the theory that he was an enthusiast deceived by others has no standing ground. Only the fourth hypothesis remains, that he was a true man, undeceived by himself or others, who relates what actually occurred, to whom Christ actually appeared, who really wrought miracles, and who is, therefore, a true witness of the resurrection of Christ, and, therefore, of the divinity of the Scriptures.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

Mr. Bradlaugh made no attempt to explain Paul's case in harmony with the atheistic theory. He simply refused to look at it. He said he had no evidence that Paul ever existed, although, inconsistently enough, he refused to say, when pressed on the point, that Paul's letters were forgeries. He rightly defined literary forgery to be the writing of any document in another man's name: yet he would not commit himself to the affirmation that the epistles of Paul were forgeries. If he could have substantiated the notion that they are forgeries, he would have asserted it gladly, of course. His refusal to assert it is, therefore, evidence that he knows the notion that they are forged cannot be maintained (as indeed the whole world of critics, if not Mr. Bradlaugh, is well aware). Therefore, the fact that Paul wrote the epistles is proved by the very tactics of the man who professed to doubt that there ever was such a man. Consequently, the case of Paul is a fact. The nature of the case was pressed upon Mr. Bradlaugh's attention, and he was asked for an explanation of it on his hypothesis; but he did not advance an explanation. His not advancing an explanation is proof that he could not explain it, and his inability to explain it is a proof that the case is inexplicable on atheistic grounds, and that the only explanation of it that can be given is the explanation given many times by Paul himself, that Christ appeared to him and endowed him with power to execute a mission in his name to the nations of the earth—in which case, Christ rose from the dead, and the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation.

In default of dealing with Paul's case, Mr. Bradlaugh contented himself with repeating, in a rabid and offensive style, the alleged inconsistencies and contradictions in the Bible he had enumerated on the previous evenings. As these have been answered in the review of the first and second evenings, it is not necessary to notice them here. It is sufficient to supply the proof which he demanded, that the apostles were ignorant men. It is to be found in Acts iv. 13: "Now when they (the rulers) saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceiving that they were UNLEARNED AND IGNORANT MEN, they marvelled."

The only other point really calling for notice is Mr. Bradlaugh's attempt to make the Bible responsible for the doctrine of eternal torments. For the full treatment of this subject, including a scriptural exegesis of the terms on which Mr. Bradlaugh relied as proving this, the reader had better refer to *Everlasting Punishment not Eternal Torment*: being an answer to the "Rev." Dr. Angus, by R. Roberts. It is to be had at the office mentioned on the cover of this pamphlet, price 8d.

FOURTH NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT.

MR. ROBERTS was somewhat diverted from the argument he had intended to elaborate this evening, by the stress laid by Mr. Bradlaugh on the absence (as he alleged) of contemporary witness to the currency of the apostolic writings in the first century and first half of the second century. The objection was of little weight even if well founded; because a book might exist from remote antiquity, and bear internal proof of its having done so, without our being able to find other books of a similar age in which it should be mentioned. The absence of such other books would be no disproof of the book we have. It would only prove that no other books had survived for the same number of ages, and this fact would not be wonderful in view of the now public character of the New Testament, and the private character of the books alleged to be absent. But though the point was of no great weight in true logic, Mr. Roberts felt it might seem weighty to some, and therefore occupied a considerable part of the time in showing that contrary to Mr. Bradlaugh's assertion, there were books, traceable back to the first and second centuries, in which the contemporary existence of the New Testament was distinctly recognised. The doing this, prevented him from saying all he intended to say

in support of the affirmation to which he had intended to devote the evening, viz: "That the literary and moral peculiarities of the Bible—the character of its sentiments, so entirely alien to the universal tendencies of human nature.—Jew and Gentile;—Its clear, chaste, vigorous and concise diction;—its agreement one part with another, notwithstanding the great intervals of time at which its different parts were produced; and its perfectly artless candour in the record of facts irrespective of their bearing for or against the interests involved—are totally at variance with the supposition that the book is the production of ignorant and designing men; and prove that its existence is due to that divine initiative and guidance in the writers to which both Paul and Peter attributed it."

In support of this proposition, Mr. Roberts intended a line of argument which was only partly carried out. The omitted parts may be briefly indicated.

The internal constitution of the Bible is the strongest evidence of its divinity. This argument is the least capable of being made palpable, especially to those unacquainted with the Bible and unaccustomed to the line of thought which it involves. The proposition falls at first with little weight on the ear; but its weight increases with increasing experience of human nature and human literature, until at last the thinking mind can dispense with all other evidence of the Bible's divinity. Its contents are found sufficient.

Some features of those contents were noticed in the debate. Its revelation concerning God is first in rank. This is distinguished from all human conceptions of Deity, as reflected in the polytheisms of confessedly unenlightened men. The gods imagined by men were limited like men. The God revealed in the Bible is declared *unsearchable*. The different powers of nature were, by the ignorant, attributed to different gods, which superficially seemed probable. The Bible attributed all to ONE GOD. Science has confirmed the Bible revelation of God to this extent, that it has shown all power to be ONE at the root, and that root "unknownable," which is only another word for the Bible term "unsearchable."

Then as to man: the philosophers taught that man was constitutionally an immaterial immortal being, underlying and distinct from the body, and capable of existence apart from it, a fallacy from which came their doctrine of *post-mortem* rewards and punishments in the elysian fields and tartarus, and a consequent rejection of the doctrine of the resurrection. This notion, succinctly defined as "the immortality of the soul," was, like their polytheism, a plausible deduction from appearances—universal among the ancients, beginning with the Egyptians, notwithstanding his association with whom, Moses, by the admission of Gibbon, is untainted with the notion. The prophets and apostles are likewise free of this philosophic speculation, and, on the contrary, teach human mortality as expounded by Tyndall and other scientists of the modern era. The doctrine of immortality which they teach is the hope of resurrection to a future existence on the earth. Science does not teach this, because science only deals with *what is*, and can throw no light on what is to be. With the doctrine of human mortality all Scripture agrees, as the reader may find proved in *Twelve Lectures*, by R. Roberts. Consequently, the Bible is in harmony with science on the subject of man as well as God: that is, as regards his present constitution. That the Bible should teach a doctrine in harmony with science in an age when all the world was dreaming about natural immortality of speculative induction, is another proof of the Bible's divinity. This argument has been obscured by orthodox religion, which accepts the Pagan view, and, by consequence, teaches the eternal torment of the unrighteous—a doctrine which gives the argument for unbelief an advantage that does not belong to it.

The Bible's depreciation of human nature, and exaltation of God, were both noticed in the debate. These peculiarities stamp it as of Divine origin. The sentiments are foreign to human nature. Their prominence in the mouths of the prophets explain the Jewish treatment of the prophets; and that treatment reacts in confirmation of the Divine origin of the sayings of the prophets. Jesus refers to it thus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, &c." (Luke xiii. 34). There was a class of prophet that received different treatment, to which Jesus also refers: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, for so ~~did~~ their fathers to the false prophets."—(Luke vi. 26). The false prophets spoke smooth or pleasant things, which ensured popularity: the true prophets spoke things that

were disagreeable to human nature, and brought destruction on themselves. Yet the Scriptures of the disagreeable prophets, which testify against the wickedness of Israel, are preserved, while the Scriptures of the false prophets have perished: in which also there is evidence of God at work.

The aversion of Israel to the teaching of the true prophets, and their relish for those who led them to idolatry, is very effectually illustrated in the case of Elijah, who, on Mount Carmel single-handed, confronted four hundred prophets of Baal. This case may be taken as the history of the subject condensed into a single incident. The Jews have always been on the side of those who drew them aside from the One God, and against the few faithful men who in different ages have striven, under Divine command, to bring them back to the paths of Moses. This is in harmony with the work of the prophets being a Divine work; and inconsistent with the notion that they acted on their own uninspired volition; for a human volition merely would have led them in a human and popular direction.

Why did the Jews prefer idolatry to the Divine institutions? This brings us to another argument. The Mosaic worship was contrary to human inclinations. It called on them to serve *an invisible God*: it required faith at their hands. Other nations had gods they could see, and whose worship they made the occasion of licence and delight. To these foreign gods, Israel turned aside from the beginning of their history, as soon as Joshua and his contemporaries were dead (Judges ii. 11-13); which is proof that their God was no invention of their own; or the outcome of a national idiosyncrasy. Other nations have always been faithful to their invented gods, because they continued subject to the taste and fancy that led to the invention. Such a thing as a nation changing its gods is unknown. This very fact is made the basis of expostulation by God with Israel, through the prophet Jeremiah: "Pass over to the Isles of Chittim and see, and send unto Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing: *hath a nation changed their gods*, which are yet no gods? But my people hath changed their glory for that which doth not profit."—(Jer. ii. 10). This fact of itself—that the Jews as a nation continually departed from the God of their fathers, while no other nation deviated from their traditional idolatries—goes a long way, in a logical process of treatment, to prove that the religion of the Jews was not a religion of Jewish origin, in the sense of its being the invention of the Jews; but was higher than they, namely, what it professes to be: a system Divinely communicated to them by the hand of Moses.

There is next the agreement of one part of the Bible with another throughout, notwithstanding the long intervals during which its different parts were produced. If it were a human production, each successive contributor would have imparted his own sentiments to it, and we should have that diversity of character which belongs to every human work in which many actors have been engaged during a series of ages. Instead of this, the book is absolutely one. Whether you take Moses, Malachi or Christ, there is the same depreciation of human nature; the same supreme exaltation of God; the same stern enunciation of duty; the same uncompromising rebuke of departure from the way of right. The spirit of the book in this respect is identical throughout, and this cannot be said of any literature under the sun, in which a variety of writers of different ages have been employed, nor is there any book under the sun characterised by the sentiments just enumerated. The Bible stands absolutely alone in this respect, like a majestic mountain among hillocks of rubbish.

Then there is the same hope, in all the books of the Bible, of a coming age in which Christ, as King of Israel, shall rule on earth universally, and mankind be blessed. A few illustrations of this must suffice. Genesis speaks of a promise to Abraham, that in him and his seed (a great personage who should possess the gate of his enemies), at a future time, should all the families of the earth be blessed.—(Gen. xxii. 17-18.) Moses speaks of a prophet like unto himself, whom God should raise up to Israel whom they should hear.—(Deut. xviii. 15-18.) Isaiah speaks of a king who should rise in the line of David, and reign over all nations, with the result of abolishing the art of war from the studies of mankind.—(Is. xi. 1-9; ii. 4; xxxii. 1-8.) Daniel speaks of one like the Son of Man who should appear, and whom all peoples, nations and languages should serve and obey.—(Dan. vii. 14.) Paul speaks of a day in which God should judge the world in righteousness by Christ (Acts xvii. 31), and when the people of Christ would reign and judge the world with him.—(1 Cor. vi. 2; 2 Tim. ii.

12.) Revelations speaks of the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of God and His Christ, who shall reign for ever and ever.—(Rev. ii. 26; xi. 15.)

If the Bible were a merely human production, there would not be this absolute identity of hope among writers, extending over three thousand years. The existence of this identity is a proof of the controlling presence of a common guidance in all the writers, even the guidance professed in the book itself: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."—(2 Pet. i. 21.) The force of this argument will be appreciated by those who realise the endless and contradictory diversities of human authorship of different ages. Its force is somewhat hidden by the corruptions of orthodox Christendom, which has long ago abandoned the one apostolic "hope of Israel," common to the whole Scriptures, and embraced the miserable substitute of an imagined *post mortem* beatification of an imaginary personal invisibility, in regions above the stars.

Then there is evidence of divinity in the Bible scheme of future life. This scheme defers all reward till an appointed era, to be inaugurated by the personal re-appearance of Christ in the earth, when many generations shall have yielded—first, to the grave and then to the resurrection—their quota of tried men—tried in necessary times of evil. The vastness and splendour of this scheme stamps it as divine. Man would never have invented such a scheme. This is not the place to prove that this is the scheme. The reader must be referred to *Twelve Lectures*, before mentioned for its full illustration.

Next there is the perfect candour of the Bible narratives, which is never characteristic of human histories. David's crime is chronicled in sober and merciless truth, although he was king when the record was written. So with the fathers before him. The naked truth is told. The very things which Mr. Bradlaugh makes use of against the Bible, are in this respect one of the highest evidences of its genuine character, for had the Bible been written by king-flatterers and sycophants, as his senseless tirades imply, there would have been a suppression of things that do not stand to the credit of those for whom they are supposed by him to have been written. Then the writers say things that never would have been said by men writing to prop up a pretended revelation. Matthew, for instance, records that at an interview with Christ after his resurrection, some of his disciples "doubted."—(Matt. xxviii. 17.) A bolsterer up of a pretended revelation would never have written this. It is written because it is true; and the fact that some doubted is an element in the self-evident truthfulness of the narrative, for it is just what would happen with real living men who, not expecting Christ to die, had seen Christ crucified and now saw him alive. In their partly-enlightened state, his death was a puzzle and his resurrection a puzzle also, and "doubt" the natural consequence. And had there been no farther evidence, the doubt of the "some" might have continued. But their doubt did not continue; all doubt vanished with the outpouring of the Spirit and display of miraculous gifts. The fact that they previously "doubted" made their subsequent confidence all the more reliable, because it showed the reason of their doubt had disappeared. Certainly, a forger, writing a fictitious narrative to obtain credit for Christ's resurrection, would never have represented any of the disciples in the act of doubting but rather in an ecstasy of adoring confidence, after the style of Roman Catholic fables.

Similar remarks apply to the statement of John that at a certain time, "many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." This is a candid record of a fact which there could be no object in publishing, but rather in suppressing, as the fact itself was capable of yielding a damaging effect to some who might argue like Mr. Bradlaugh: "If men who saw his miracles deserted him, how can you expect me to believe, &c." Its record is an evidence of truth; and the occurrence of the fact recorded is in harmony with our acquaintance with human nature. Men get accustomed to anything. Marvels cease to be marvels when they are of common occurrence. It is easy to understand that men, drawn after Christ in the first instance by the sensational attraction of his miracles, would easily become disaffected when doctrines unpleasant to human nature were propounded for their acceptance. It is human nature to the life. A fictitious writer would never have imagined it possible for any human being to desert the Christ of his narrative: he would be certain to represent every one as awe-struck and spell-bound for ever,

And even if he could have imagined another possibility, he would have been careful to conceal it from a narrative intended to create confidence in a Christ that never existed. The record that many ceased to be his disciples is one among many strong proofs of the genuineness of the narrative.—There is a number of such candid statements. In fact, they abound throughout the Scriptures and constitute an evidence in the very opposite direction to that to which such as Mr. Bradlaugh make them point. We must be content with the two examples cited.

Then the literary character of the Bible is evidence of a more than human authorship. Its diction is chaste, dignified, vigorous, free of redundancy or irrelevant details. It is unlike all other books in the nature of its historic narratives. It never puts on record the kind of occurrences that come under the category of story and adventure. It never shows any regard for the curiosity of the reader. It never ministers to the taste that finds pleasure in the mere knowledge of what happens. It confines itself to matters having relation to the main purpose in hand. If it ever diverges from its condensed historical style, and enters into personal particulars, it is because those personal particulars have a bearing on some subsequent event of public importance, or to illustrate the operation of some truth important to be known. The story of Amon and Tamar is an example: it led up to the rebellion of Absalom. The story of David and Uriah is another: it led to a public revolution in the punishment of David. The story of the Ephraimite and his concubine is another: it led to the near extirpation of a tribe, and the slaughter of multitudes in Israel in punishment of their sins. In no case is a story told for its own sake. In this the Bible differs from all human books: and the difference is inexplicable if the Bible be a human book; because if a human book, it would show the universal taste for mere incident, in the liking for which, Jew and Gentile are alike, as shown by the writings of Josephus. The following is a good specimen of the Bible's historical conciseness: "Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts; half of the people followed Tibni, the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni, the son of Ginath; so Tibni died, and Omri reigned."—(1 Kings xvi. 21.) A human account of this matter would have entered upon the intrigues and the fightings, and the adventures incident to the triumph of Omri, with a due admixture of trumpet blowings over this one's intrepidity, and that one's wonderful generalship, &c. This argument in its full force will only be appreciated by those who possess a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, and some acquaintance with human writings of all ages. With such it is of great weight. To others, it may be evident by a comparison between the Bible itself and all imitations that have been attempted, such as the Apocrypha and Apocryphal New Testament.

Finally, the character and precepts of Christ as displayed in the New Testament, are themselves conclusive evidence of the divinity of the Scriptures. No man could have imagined such a character; no man could have invented such precepts, least of all such men as those who wrote the gospel narrative—poor fishermen, "unlearned and ignorant men." The only way such a narrative could come to be written (even if men who are called "learned," had been the writers)—is by the appearance of such a man as Christ, and the presence with the writers of such a guidance in the writers as Christ promised he would send them after his departure—the guidance of the Holy Spirit which should "bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them."

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

There was little in Mr. Bradlaugh's argument on the fourth night calling for any further notice than what it received in Mr. Roberts's replies. It was in the nature of a feint to draw the other side from a strong position. He raised a great outcry against the ecclesiastical writers of the first, second and third centuries, whose works Mr. Roberts referred to merely to show that there was external evidence of the existence of the New Testament at the time it professes to have been produced. Many things he said that were misleading, and some that were positively untrue. Such, for instance, as his remark, "It is simple impertinence (for Mr. Roberts) to read

names to us and tell us he has got the books here when those books do not exist in the world." "Mr. Roberts said he would quote to you from Tatian. There is not a scrap of Tatian existing." Mr. Roberts did not pretend to have books that do not exist. He did not pretend to have even all the books that do exist. When he said he produced "five witnesses" to a particular date, he meant in the sense of producing them in argument. Tatian's existence as an author is proved by quotations from him in Eusebius, who wrote shortly after the end of the third century. On the same authority we know that Tatian was born before A.D. 150, and that he wrote a book entitled *A Harmony of the Four Gospels*. The fact that we do not possess this *Harmony of the Four Gospels* does not weaken the evidence arising from the fact of Tatian writing such a work. His writing such a work shows that the four gospels existed in his day, and also that they had existed as a universally-accepted authority among Christians for a long time before, for men do not write harmonies of unknown and newly-produced books. But Mr. Bradlaugh sought to obscure the argument by making a great outcry about the absence of Tatian's books, and, no doubt, he succeeded with some lacking penetration, but the truth calmly remains for all that.

Mr. Bradlaugh also made a point of the dates adduced being "disputed dates." In the sense that they lack the definiteness and certainty of a registrar's certificate of birth, no doubt they may be disputed; but they are undisputed in the substantial sense. That is they are substantial approximations to truth, and even allowing for a few years' uncertainty, one side or another, the argument founded on the writings of the men remain untouched. The argument is that men living within a few years of the dates mentioned could not quote the New Testament familiarly, which they all do, if the New Testament had not existed as a widely-accepted authority. Mr. Bradlaugh's tactics merely amounted to throwing so much dust over this point. His reckless declarations will have no weight with those who are calmly in search of truth and reason.

Mr. Bradlaugh made great use of the literary forgeries that were undoubtedly common in the third and fourth centuries. He asked among so many forgeries, how was he to know the true? He might have been excused on the score of inability of discernment had he rested there; but when he went on to deny the existence of true apostolic writings, it had simply to be shown that he was going against all reason; for surely the very existence of forgeries prove that there must have been something originally true and valuable to imitate. Mr. Bradlaugh's answer to this was, "If Mr. Roberts's contention is true, the existence of a false gospel of Barnabas would be evidence of an imitation of a true gospel of Barnabas." The rejoinder is, first, perhaps there was a true gospel of Barnabas, for Luke testifies (Luke i. 1) that "many" had taken in hand to set forth an account of the things believed among the Christians, and perhaps Barnabas was among the number. But, secondly, it would at least prove the existence either of Barnabas or of the New Testament allusion to Barnabas. And it would prove that the writing of a gospel was according to the imitator's conception of what Barnabas was likely to do: and this conception must have been founded on the fact that the apostles and their companions did write gospels. So that even in this way, a false gospel of Barnabas, while perhaps not proving a true gospel of Barnabas, would prove that there were true gospels somewhere. We notice this point because it is one of the few arguments of Mr. Bradlaugh's which seemingly had something in them. Mr. Bradlaugh tried to make a great deal out of the fact that Mr. Roberts did not read extracts from the books of the early ecclesiastical writers, in support of his assertion that they quoted from the New Testament. He even said unjustifiable and untrue things on the subject; as for instance, that these writers "do not say a word of what Mr. Roberts thought they said." The best answer to this will be to quote a few samples of their sayings, with references to the works where they may be found. This is done by the aid of Dr. Brewer's compilation, which was produced at the discussion.

1.—CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA,

Who was born somewhere about the middle of the second century: died about A.D. 213.

He wrote several works in Greek, and among others *Pædagogus* (The Instructor),

and *Stromata* (Sundries). From these two the following are extracts: "This passage is not to be found in any of the FOUR GOSPELS, but is taken from the (spurious) gospel to the Egyptians."—(*Strom.* iii. 465. D.) "As Luke in the *Acts of the Apostles* records Paul to have said."—(*Strom.* v. 588. B.) "In like manner writes Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans*."—(*Strom.* iii. 457. B.) "The blessed Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, says, Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children."—(*Pæd.* i. 96. D.)

2.—THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH,

Who was born early in the second century, and died A.D. 181.

He wrote three books, to "Autolychus," in defence of the Christian religion. The following are extracts: "These things the Holy Scriptures teach us: for JOHN says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (Book ii. 100 C.) The gospel says "Love your enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use you, for if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even publicans the same?"—(Book iii. 126, B.C.)

3.—ATHENAGORAS, THE ATHENIAN PHILOSOPHER,

Who flourished in the second half of the second century.

He wrote a petition to the Emperor on behalf of the Christians whom he had joined: also a treatise on the resurrection. The following are extracts: "To convince you we are not Atheists, hear the maxims in which we are instructed:" "I say unto you, love your enemies: bless them that curse you and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven, who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—(*Petition*, page 11. B.C.) "The corruptible must put on incorruption" (*The Resurrection*, page 61 C.)

4.—IRENÆUS, OF LYONS,

Who was born about A.D. 130, and died A.D. 202.

He wrote a work "against heresies" in five books. The following are extracts: "Matthew, among the Jews, wrote a gospel in their own language while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome. After the death of the fore-named apostles, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the things that Peter had preached. Next Luke, Paul's companion, put down in a book the gospel preached by Paul. Lastly John, the beloved disciple, published his gospel while he was dwelling at Ephesus" (*Adv. Hær.* iii. 1). "This same disciple (John) says in his epistle, little children, it is the last time"—(*Adv. Hær.* iii. 16). Irenæus also mentions by name thirteen of Paul's epistles, and quotes copiously from them in the course of his argument, and speaks of "The Revelation of John," the disciple of the Lord.

5.—MELITO OF SARDIS,

Who flourished in the second half of the second century.

He wrote several works in Greek, and among others, one entitled *Extracts of the Law and the Prophets*, in his preface to which he says: "When I went into the East, I procured an accurate account of the books of *The Old Testament*," which is, of course, an indirect recognition of the New Testament.

6.—TATIAN,

Who was born about A.D. 130, and died about the close of the second century.

He wrote several works, only one of which is now extant, viz., *Oration to the*

Greeks, in which he quotes from the epistles. Eusebius mentions the name of one of Tatian's other works, which furnishes evidence of the existence of the gospels in Tatian's day, viz., *A Harmony of the Four Gospels*.

7.—JUSTIN MARTYR,

Who was born about the beginning of the second century and died about A.D. 167.

He wrote three works, viz., an *Apology* to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, on behalf of the Christians; an *Apology* to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius with the same object, and a *Dialogue with Trypho*. His quotations from the New Testament are very numerous. The following are specimens:—"Christ said, Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."—(*Apology*, 94A.) "Before the Lord was crucified, he said, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected of the Scribes and Pharisees, and be crucified, and the third day he shall rise again.'"—(*Dialogue*, 327A.) "Paul, in his address to the Greeks, saith thus: 'Be you as I am, for I am as ye are.'"—(*Dialogue*, 40D.)

8.—PAPIAS,

Who was born early in the second century and died about A.D. 153.

He wrote *Five Books of Commentaries on the Sayings of our Lord*. In his preface he says: "If at any time I met with one who had conversed with the elders, I enquired of the sayings of those elders. I asked him what Andrew or Peter said, what Philip said, what Thomas or James had said, what John had said, what Matthew had said or any other of the Lord's apostles. What they told me by word of mouth have I here set down in writing, and nothing in these Commentaries has been taken from books." Of Matthew, he says: "It was written in Hebrew and was termed *the Lord's sayings*;" and of Mark: "Mark was the interpreter and follower of Peter, and the gospel which bears his name was composed from Peter's own words."—(Book iii. 31.)

9.—POLYCARP,

Who was born about A.D. 80, and died A.D. 167.

He wrote an epistle to the Philippians. The following are extracts recognising the existence of the New Testament: "Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world, as Paul teaches?" (cap. xi.) "Neither I nor any one like me can come up to the wisdom of the blessed Paul, who wrote to you a letter, being absent in body but present in spirit."—(Cap. iii.) "Remember what the Lord said, Judge not that ye be not judged; forgive and ye shall be forgiven; be merciful that ye may obtain mercy."—(Cap. ii.)

10.—IGNATIUS,

Who was born about A.D. 35, and died about A.D. 107.

He wrote seven epistles in which the existence of the New Testament is recognised thus: "You are the companions of St. Paul, who throughout his whole epistle to you (the Ephesians), mentions you with praise."—(Epistle to the Ephesians, sec. 12.) He many times quotes, without acknowledgment, the words of the New Testament. Thus: "The tree is known by its fruits" (to the Eph. xiv.): "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (to Polycarp 2.) "Christ was baptised of John to fulfil all righteousness (to Smyrna 1.)"

11.—HERMAS,

Who flourished before the end of the first century.

He wrote a book entitled *The Shepherd*, in which there are some fifty quotations from

the New Testament, without naming the books from which the quotations are drawn. The following are specimens: "No man cometh unto the Father but through the Son."—(*Similitude* ix. 12.) "The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit: and if thou defile the temple of God thou shalt die."—(*Sim.* v. 7.) "If ye resist the devil he will flee from you."—(*Precept* xii. 5.)

12.—CLEMENT OF ROME,

Who was born about A.D. 30 and died A.D. 100.

He wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, in which the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians is expressly referred to thus: "Take into your hands *the epistle of Paul the apostle, and see what he wrote to you.*"—(ch. xlvii.) He quotes many times from the New Testament, without referring to the source, thus: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"—(ch. xiii.) "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, Woe to that man by whom offences come. It were better for that man if he had not been born."—(ch. xlv.) "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."—(ch. lvi.)

13.—BARNABAS,

Who is supposed to have been born at the beginning of the first century, and to have died A.D. 61.

The epistle bearing his name, whether written by him or not, was extant in the first century, as proved by the allusions of other writers to it. He quotes from Matthew, Luke, Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Hebrews, 1 Pet. and Revelations. Examples: "Let us beware, lest it should happen unto us; many are called but few chosen"—(ch. iv.). "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."—(ch. v.) "Give to every one that asketh thee."—(ch. xix.)

FIFTH NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT.

THE argument on the origin of the Jewish nation as involved in the writings of Moses, was fairly indicated, but only partly illustrated. It is capable of being worked out in great detail with convincing results. The authenticity of the writings is sufficiently established by the testimony of Christ and the voice of the Jewish nation, as pointed out and proved in the debate. We have therefore merely to consider the history set forth. This history, like the history of Christianity, is only intelligible with God in it. This will be seen by anyone fairly looking into it. With such a view only can we understand the entire absence of any endeavour in any part of it, to ascribe the law to Moses or any credit of any part of the transactions to him, or to the Jewish nation. So far from taking credit, Moses expressly said to the people, "I have not done these things of mine own mind" (Num. xvi. 8). It is a popular habit to ascribe the Jewish law to the wisdom of Moses as if he were the author of it. This habit is totally at variance with the scriptural representation. God is always kept in the foreground and Moses appears as His servant only. This peculiarity is not confined to the language of Moses, but belongs to the events connected with the organization of the nation. It is particularly manifest in the incident on which Moses based his claim to Israel's submission to the law. He did not, like an impostor, merely report that so and so had happened to him privately, and that the result was this law which they had to obey. He based his claim to their submission on an open and public event of which they were all witnesses. "He brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the

nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether in a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof went up as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly"—(Ex. xix. 17). The people were afraid at the manifestation. "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the noise of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die."—(Ex. xx. 18, 19.) Afterwards referring to this, Moses asks them to remember it: "Specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together and I will make them HEAR my word *that they may learn to fear ME* all the days that they shall live upon the earth . . . and the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire. Ye heard the voice of the Lord, but saw no similitude: only ye heard a voice . . . Did ever people hear the voice of God as thou hast heard and live? . . . Out of heaven, He made Thee to hear His voice that He might instruct thee: and upon earth He shewed thee His great fire and thou heardest His voice out of the midst of the fire."—(Deut. iv. 10-12; 33, 36.) It was this public demonstration that laid the foundation of the authority over a rebellious nation like Israel, of Moses, whom they several times sought to destroy. This was the object of it. It is so stated: "The Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, *that the people may hear when I speak with thee AND BELIEVE THEE FOR EVER.*"—(Ex. xix. 9.) When the event was over, "The Lord said unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.*"—(Ex. xx. 22.)

Now for the present argument, it matters not whether these things really happened, or were invented by a writer who narrated them to establish the credit of Moses. The great fact connected with them lies here: *they base the authority of the law on the command of God and never on the wisdom of Moses.* And the argument arising from this fact is that such a thing is inexplicable on the hypothesis of the Mosaic writings being writings of a merely human origin, for written with a human origin, they would have been written with a human aim like all other human writings; and the aim would have been to show that the law was due to the superior sagacity of Moses, and to set forth the constant loyalty of the Israelites to it. Of course, the argument is strengthened a hundred fold when it is shown that Moses was the writer.

The nature of the sentiment pervading the law, is inconsistent with the idea of a human origin. We know what human nature is in the thousand instances of experience, history and political institutions. To glorify the leader or the nation, is the tendency of all men in every country and age; and the Jews, as we know them in their speeches and literature, are no exception. But the Mosaic institutions offer a complete contrast to this tendency. Instead of boasting in ancestry and the exploits of their armies, they were taught, for instance, to speak depreciatingly of their origin on the presentation of the first-fruits; and to refer their deliverance to God. They were taught to say, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation great, mighty and populous. And the Egyptians evilly entreated us and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour and our oppression. And *the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs and wonders.* And He hath brought us into this place."—(Deut. xxvi. 5). The deliverance of Israel is never ascribed to Israelitish prowess. The style of allusion is well illustrated in Psalm xlv. 1-3: "We have heard with our ears, O God: our fathers have told us what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old, how Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them: how Thou didst afflict the people and cast them out. For *they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but THY RIGHT HAND AND THINE ARM* and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them."

This peculiarity is intelligible enough if God spake to Moses and did all the mighty works by which Israel was delivered from Egyptian thralldom. On any other principle, it is unintelligible. Particularly is this the case with certain matters of detail. There are features in the law which could not have originated with men

legislating out of their own heads. For instance, Israel was commanded to let the land lie untended and unsown every seventh year; and we read this in connection with it: "And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow nor gather in our increase. Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for THREE YEARS."—(Lev. xxv. 2.) What man or men would have been mad enough to append to a public law a provision beyond all human control (affecting the weather and the crops), and subject to the test of experience once in every seven years? For inventors to have enacted such a law would have been to make the detection of their imposture inevitable; and that in a short time, for once in every seven years it would be found whether, as a matter of fact, the enhanced production took place. Take God out of this law, and its enactment is inexplicable; but if God spake by Moses, it is perfectly intelligible.

So with the attendance at the periodical feasts exacted of all Israel. Three times a year were they all to assemble at the chosen centre. In the natural order, obedience to this would expose their country to the danger of invasion, while they were absent, but this assurance was associated with the law. "Neither shall any man desire thy land when thou shalt go up thrice in the year to appear before the Lord thy God."—(Ex. xxxiv. 24.) If God gave the law, this is intelligible, because, as with the weather and the crops, so with the matter of human desires, it is in His power to regulate their operation; but if this law was a human invention, it is impossible to conceive how a promise came to be introduced as to affairs beyond human control, and the truthfulness of which was open to test every year.

There is a variety of incidents and other matters of detail to which the same general remarks apply, viz., that their record is inexplicable on any theory short of the narrative being a true one. The length to which the review has already extended forbids more than a brief reference to one or two of them. Prominent among them is the reason given for Moses, who led them out of Egypt, not being allowed to take the children of Israel over Jordan into the Land of Promise and not being allowed to enter there himself. Moses alluding to this reason in his rehearsal on the plains of Moab, says: "The Lord was *angry with me* for your sakes, saying, 'Thou also shalt not go in thither. But Joshua, the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither; encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.'"—(Deut. i. 37.) The incident to which Moses alludes is described in detail in Num. xx. 7-13; and expressly referred to in Num. xxvii. 12-14. On the reading of these parts, it will be found that the incident in brief was this: under the irritation caused by the continual discontent and insubordination of the people, Moses, when directed by God to bring water for them out of the rock, struck the rock twice with his rod, and took the credit of bringing out the water. "Hear now, ye rebels," he exclaimed, "*must we fetch you water out of this rock?*" This was an offence to God in standing between Him and Israel, and is thus condemned by God: "Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."—(Num. xx. 12.) Let there be read in connection with this matter the account of the death of Moses in Deut. xxxii. 48-52 and xxxiv. 1-6: such a story is intelligible if true; but if not true, for what purpose could it have been invented? We must judge of the theory of invention in such a case by the history of invention universally. Invention is resorted to always with an object: and in a case like this (the leader of a nation), the object is to establish the credit and reputation of the man concerned. But here is an incident having the very opposite effect. Here is an account of the death of Moses, showing his career cut short in punishment for the unfaithful use of divine power in a certain matter. The man who can believe such a story to have been invented must either have a very poor acquaintance with mankind, or a poor capacity for judging of the simplest facts. Invention, in such a case, if required to account for the death of Moses before the completion of his work, would be likely to have taken the form of representing that God had told him he (Moses) was too good and great a man to be allowed to enter upon the hard and bloody work of conquering the Canaanitish nation; and that, therefore, he would let him go to rest. The "patriotic" inventor would never have represented Moses an offender against the majesty of God, and still less that he became so through the inveterate stubbornness of the people he was leading from Egypt. Such a story is self-evidently a true one; it is evidence that God wrought

with Israel, and that therefore the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation.

Other incidents of a like nature are the death of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, by fire, for non-compliance with a divine command (Lev. x. 3); and the discouraging report of the spies sent to search the land; the people's endorsement of it; their proposal to stone Moses, and appoint another captain, under whom they might return to Egypt: the sentence that they must as a punishment wander forty years in the wilderness, till the whole of the adults should be worn out by death (Num. xiii and xiv. the whole of the chapters); the murmuring of the people for flesh, and the distress of Moses at the burden of his position over them (Num. xi. 1-15); the insurrection of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the people's sympathy with them, even after their destruction (Num. xvi.)—all of these, and others which will occur to the reflective reader of the Scriptures, are passages in the history of Israel that are inexplicable as to how they came to be recorded, except on the one simple principle that they happened: for the tendency of them is to blacken the national character of Israel, and to take away all ground of even the commonest human satisfaction in the contemplation of their history. The invention of records having such a tendency is inconsistent with the universally known character of man, Jew and Gentile. Where invention is resorted to, it is to heighten the credit of a nation or its leaders. These things cannot have been invented. They are recorded because they happened; and in that case, God wrought with Israel in all their generations, from Moses to Christ, and, therefore, the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of divine revelation.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

Mr. Bradlaugh made no attempt to meet his opponent's argument, but wasted his time with the technicalities of the evidence of the so-called "Christian fathers," whose writings are extraneous to the main subject. It was, perhaps, a clever diversion—an attempt to draw the enemy from a strong position; but not the course of an earnest man, persuaded of the truth of his argument, and prepared and anxious to grapple with all difficulties on their merits. Mr. Bradlaugh aims no higher than legal strategy. His tactics were well described by a friend of his who intended the description as a compliment, but which will hardly be regarded in that light by earnest men. The friend in question, signing himself "T. Evans," described Mr. Bradlaugh as "most skilful of fence," remarking that had he not been so, "he would have been 'cornered' several times."—*National Reformer*, July 2, 1876. "Fence" is all very well in the conduct of a law case in court, where the aim is to avoid by hook or by crook material damage; but when it is resorted to in a process which concerns the investigation of truth for its own sake, it becomes an illegitimate and contemptible art, which only men bent upon a personal triumph would use. It really means the art of obscuring as much as possible the facts which the other side may seek to exhibit, and of evading the logical results of facts that have to be admitted. The employment of such an art amounts to the intrusion of brute force upon the domain of reason, and the arrest of the process of evidence by mechanical obstruction—an art cultivated by a certain class of the legal profession, but not to be considered admissible in the field of candid polemics.

An illustration of it was furnished in the very instance on which Mr. Bradlaugh's friend in question particularly complimented him, in a letter appearing at the time of the discussion in the columns of the *National Reformer*. The instance concerned the extract from Athenagoras, which was cited by Mr. Roberts to show that the New Testament existed in the days of Athenagoras, inasmuch as Athenagoras cites one of the precepts of Christ, drawn from Matt. v. 44-45. Athenagoras does not give a reference to Matthew, he uses the words of Matthew, which is the material argument in the case. But in Dr. Brewer's compilation, from which Mr. Roberts quoted the extract, the reference is supplied, not as part of the quotation but as a mere guide to the student, by which he may prove whether the words quoted are Matthew's words or no. Mr. Bradlaugh holding the book in his hand, seized hold of this feature and declared with much vehemence that the reference to Matthew was not in Athenagoras at all, but had been added by Dr. Brewer; which, of course, was true, but did not dispose of the evidence of Athenagoras at all. The evidence

of Athenagoras consisted in *his using words that are in Matthew, in describing to the Emperor the precepts in which the Christians were taught.* But Mr. Bradlaugh concealed, or sought to conceal this evidence by declaiming about the reference which had never been put forward at all! His manner of doing it betrayed a consciousness that he was indulging in artifice; but of course the unthinking portion of the audience, unable on the spot to discern between the one thing and the other, could not see the wince either in the manner or the argument, but thought a strong point had been made, while the correspondent in the *National Reformer* spoke of Mr. Bradlaugh disposing of Athenagoras "as easily as an athlete would overthrow a child." "It was shown," said he, "that the *material words* of reference had been added." The writer of these words either did not comprehend "the material words" in the argument or he deliberately lent himself to a false note of triumph. This is a fair specimen of the kind of sophistry by which thousands are daily hoodwinked, and apparently glad to be so.

The instances in which Mr. Bradlaugh did touch on the merits of the argument were few. Referring to the statement in the Mosaic account of the exodus, that the clothes of the children of Israel did not wax old during the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness, he asked the audience to imagine a man at the end of the forty years wearing the clothes he had when a baby. Of course the audience laughed; but the folly at which they laughed was Mr. Bradlaugh's—not the Bible's. Babies' clothes might be of unwasting stuff without being used for those who had outgrown them. Sensible mothers would put by the undecaying articles for the babies to come after; and it is only Mr. Bradlaugh's reckless logic that requires us to suppose that the Jewish mothers that came out of Egypt were less sensible than the Jewish mothers of to-day.

So when he points to John the Baptist sending disciples to Jesus to know whether he were the Christ or no, and asks how this is consistent with John having heard a voice from heaven at the Jordan, declaring at Christ's baptism that he was the Son of God, he only appears to strike a blow at the New Testament account. No better proof than this very circumstance could be given that the New Testament narrative is an un concocted and true narrative. A concoctor of such a story would have imagined and represented John the Baptist as, of course, animated by a sublime and indomitable confidence that no circumstances could affect. But the narrative being true, we find John subject to the weakness of human nature. Shut up in prison at a time when, in common with all the disciples, he "thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear" (Luke xix. 11), the overpowering effect of confinement and hope inexplicably deferred, is seen in an embassage to Christ to re-assure himself. And Christ's answer, instead of being inconsistent with truth, must appear in the opposite light to every reflecting mind. Mr. Bradlaugh asks why he did not remind John of the heavenly voice at his baptism. Jesus did better than that. He did not appeal to faltering human memory of an event already doubted; he appealed to *what was actually transpiring*. "Go and tell John WHAT YE SEE: how that the dead are raised," &c. If the story had been concocted, no doubt the narrative which, in the first place, would never have represented John in doubt, would, in the case of that supposition, have made Christ appeal triumphantly to the events of the Jordan.

The same train of confirmatory thought is suggested in relation to that other and more painful scene in the history of Christ, which Mr. Bradlaugh desecrated with his blasphemous declamation: viz., the agony of his expiring moments, when he exclaimed: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Mr. Bradlaugh asked how such an exclamation could come from the lips of a man who knew that his death was to be the salvation of the world; and whether the words are not a confutation of his professed character. The question derives its piquancy from the assumption that the tranquillity and mental composure of the Saviour ought to have been imperturbable. No doubt, in the case of an invented Christ, it would have been so represented. We should have had the sort of demeanour imputed to him that is alleged of the canonized "saints" of Roman Catholic fable. We should have had the spectacle of a transfixed man, looking placid and at ease, and delivering himself, in beatific trance, of an unnatural speech, calling upon heaven and earth to witness his confidence and submission without murmur or wince to a death which was necessary for the salvation of men. Instead of that, we have "the man Christ Jesus," showing all the suscepti-

bilities of a human being. We have him approaching death the day before with a fearful apprehension that caused him to "sweat as if it were great drops of blood." We have him praying earnestly that if it were possible, the cup might pass from him: "yet not my will but Thine be done." After this, we have him unresistingly submitting to apprehension and condemnation and crucifixion. And then we see him transfixed on the cross, suspended in the most agonizing position in which it is possible for a human being to be placed, with the whole weight of his body bearing upon his out-stretched and lacerated hands and feet. We see him endure for six hours the fierce agonies of crucifixion, and at the end of that time, it is no unnatural sound we hear when with a loud wail of agony, he exclaims "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" Is such a wail inconsistent with his previous knowledge in hours of calmness that God required him to die? Nay, is it inconsistent even with the continuance of that knowledge? Was it not the fact that God had forsaken him in the sense of leaving him in the hands of his enemies, and in the sense, too, of withdrawing from him that overshadowing and immeasurable presence of the Spirit that had been with him during all the days of his ministry? The "why" may seem to express surprise where expectation ought to have excluded it, but we have to think that although the fact of his death was known to him beforehand, it may be that he did not realise to himself all the horrors of the ordeal till the dark cloud actually came upon him; and that in the weakness of the hour (for he was crucified through, in or out of weakness—2 Cor. xiii. 4), his mental vision may have become clouded with the shadow of death, and caused him to ask what he would not have asked in the calm prospect of the event itself. The whole picture is thoroughly unartificial. It is such as men depicting an imaginary or invented Christ would never have drawn. No stronger evidence exists of the truth of Christ's profession and mission than those very dying words which Mr. Bradlaugh made the subject of his coarse enquiries.

SIXTH NIGHT.

MR. ROBERTS'S ARGUMENT.

IN nature, the argument was satisfactory, but not in extent. This was inevitable from a vast subject having to be crowded into a very small compass. Its vastness may be inferred from the fact that Bishop Newton, in attempting to illustrate the fulfilment of Bible prophecy, filled a volume of hundreds of pages.

However, its logical essence is not weakened by brevity. Its pith lies in the fact of the universal impossibility of prophecy. It is impossible to lay too much stress on this fact. The foretelling of an eclipse is not a prediction: it is merely an arithmetical deduction from known rates of progress. The predictions which belong to the Bible have to do with the state of countries, the fortunes of races, the destinies of individuals—all matters quite beyond human calculation. The results in these cases depend upon so many unknown contingencies that only a Power having control of those contingencies could say what will happen. It will convince anyone of this if they try to foretell the issues of the Eastern Question; the future of France; the fate of the Disraeli Ministry, or the destiny of the Prince Imperial.

The notion that Moses and the prophets were only astute men who by a large discernment of human affairs, were able to foretell what should happen centuries afterwards, is not only absolutely gratuitous, but it is opposed to all experience of men. There are probably as astute men living in our day as in any age, and where is the man that can tell us a day ahead what shall be? On the natural discernment theory, there ought to be better prophets now than at any time, because there is so much larger a stock of human experience to go by than at any former time. But in point of fact, there is not the least ability anywhere to foretell the future. The future is a dead wall to the human eye. No man can forecast even the markets for a day ahead, let alone political destinies which are so peculiarly liable to unknown contingency. This inability to penetrate the future is appealed to in the Scriptures

as the evidence of imposture on the part of those in Israel who falsely pretended to be divine. The challenge is put in this form: "Let them bring forth and *show us what shall happen* SHOW THE THINGS THAT ARE TO COME HEREAFTER that we may know that ye are gods."—(Isa. xli. 22-23.) In contrast to this, we have the following declaration from God: "I am God, and there is none like me, *declaring the end from the beginning* and from ancient times, *the things that are not yet done*, saying, my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: BEFORE THEY SPRING FORTH, I TELL YOU OF THEM" (Isa. xli. 9; xlii. 9). Moses and the prophets foretold the fate of the Jews thousands of years ahead, and also the leading developments of Gentile power in their relation to God's further purpose on earth. It cannot be said that the ability to do this was a Jewish faculty: for the Jews are as helpless to-day as their Gentile neighbours. They have had no prophets among them since God forsook them for their iniquities, and dispersed them through the countries. There is only one possible explanation of the prophecies in the case, and that is the explanation given by the prophets themselves, when they represent that God spoke to them what they said and wrote, and in that case, the Scriptures are the authentic and reliable records of Divine revelation.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ARGUMENT.

Mr. Bradlaugh simply evaded the issue, and sought to cover his retreat by a great outcry against the alleged prurient character of the Bible. This was sufficiently met in the debate. It is one of the proofs of the Bible's divinity that it speaks of things as they are without reference to human delicacies, which in most cases are a mere recoil from appearances not founded on an intrinsic aversion to wrong. Many minds easily shocked at a breach of human manners, are absolutely insensible to impressions of righteousness. The Bible deals with facts and truth; and if these may sometimes appear prurient, it is only because of the prurient fastidiousness of mankind, and not because of the use made of the facts. If the Bible ever makes delicate allusions, it is never in the spirit of lust, but always as a mere matter of literal and colourless fact. In this there is a vast difference between the Bible and other books with which Mr. Bradlaugh most unreasonably sought to class it. Shakespeare and Byron would have no fascination for prurient readers if their allusions were like the Bible's. Mr. Bradlaugh's inuendo would have more force against medical books than against the Bible: but the fact is, there is no reason in the objection whatever. It was one of several instances in which Mr. Bradlaugh's reckless logic allowed him to appear in the unnatural character of an indignant virtuoso against a book which, in spite of all his diatribes, teaches a virtue beyond the capacity of the majority of men to understand or appreciate.

The only other thing calling for notice is Mr. Bradlaugh's remark, that in the case of there having been a pre-Adamite race, Adam was not "the first man" which 1 Cor. xv. 44 calls him. The answer is, first, the pre-Adamite race are not spoken of as man but as "the angels which sinned" (2 Pet. ii. 4), and that, therefore, there is no inconsistency in describing Adam as "the first man." And, secondly, even if the pre-Adamite race had been human, Adam was "the first man" of the present race, and as this is the sense in which Paul uses the phrase, it is in no way inconsistent with the pre-Adamite existence of another race of which he was not then speaking.

CONCLUSION.

The Review is now at an end. Mr. Roberts thanks Mr. Bradlaugh for permitting him to add to it the report of the discussion. Mr. Roberts has offered Mr. Bradlaugh the opportunity of writing a rejoinder to it for appearance in the same pamphlet, but Mr. Bradlaugh has not accepted the offer; and, therefore, the report and the review go forth without the reply from him that he might be able to give; but Mr. Bradlaugh has other means of letting his friends know his mind, of which he

will, doubtless, avail himself should he consider it necessary to take notice of anything appearing herein.

It is only fair to Mr. Bradlaugh to add that as far as the report of the last three nights of the debate is concerned, he has not revised it, though offered the opportunity of doing so. He considers the reporting of that part of the debate badly done. In fact he stated this to be the reason for his declining the task of revision. The labour required, he said, would be too great to be accomplished within a reasonable time. It is right to say that the part of the debate in question was reported by a man appointed by Mr. Bradlaugh's own agent; and that the first half of the debate which Mr. Bradlaugh commended as well done, was reported for Mr. Hodgkinson, of Norman Cross, by Mr. Arthur Andrew, with Mr. Pulbrook, 28, Threadneedle Street, London.



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